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ABSTRACT

The nine papers presented here treat the implications for language teaching arising from the fundamental notion that personal growth, cultural development and international communication are three interwoven elements of human progress. The papers are organized as follows: (1) an introductory chapter on language learning for cultural development and international communication, focusing on instructional objectives in the context of general educational goals; (2) language contact in a multicultural context, emphasizing the relationship between diglossia and bilingualism, interference and language attitudes; (3) contrastive psycho-sociolinguistics and language teaching, including a discussion of error analysis and pedagogical implications; (4) psychological and socio-educational aspects of bilingual and multicultural education; (5) language varieties, language levels, language for special purposes and individual differences; (6) curriculum organization and interdisciplinary information; (7) language teaching strategies, particularly formal grammar-translation and reading approaches, various functional approaches, and an integrated approach; (8) language teaching tactics, techniques, procedures and aids; and (9) the expansion of research in second-language teaching. Each section contains a bibliography. (AMH)

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TEACHING SECOND LANGUAGE IN MULTILINGUAL/MULTICULTURAL CONTEXTS

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0. LANGUAGE LEARNING FOR CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Any definition of the type of curriculum organization and teaching methods must start from a definition of the ends and objectives of education and instruction. The planning of an adequate language learning programme is dependent on the answer to the basic preliminary question, "Why study modern languages?" Today's answer is based on a clearer recognition of some essential components of fundamental education. Contemporary educated man cannot do away with a richer and broader ability to communicate not only within his own community but also -- and more and more cogently - outside his direct or immediate environment. Personal growth, cultural development, and international communication are three strictly interwoven elements of human progress.

At the outset of the following discussion it is therefore worth quoting the encouraging and stimulating statements issued by Luther H. Evans, former general director of the UNESCO, at the opening session of the international seminar on the teaching of modern languages, held at Nuwara Eliya, Ceylon, August 1953 :

> "L'Unesco nourrit le plus sincère respect pour la diversité des langues, qui sont l'un des moyens d'expression les plus subtils et les plus personnels du génie.... L'Unesco entend encourager la connaissance des langues de grande diffusion, qui permettent de communiquer avec de plus larges fractions de l'humanité. Il s'agit pour elle de faciliter à tous les peuples l'accès à l'universalité des cultures, tout en sauvegardant et même en développant l'originalité profonde de chacune d'elles" (UNESCO, 1955).

It is advisable to distinguish between ultimate educative ends and specific instructional objectives when we deal with curriculum planning.

0.1 Ultimate educative ends.- They set the broader philosophical framework of language education. They are both personal and social. The former are related to the adequate development of individual personality. The latter refer to the process of socialization.

0.1.1 All-round formation of the individual's personality.- It is generally admitted that the study of modern languages is equally formative of the mind just as the study of classical languages and of literary and scientific subjects. The study of modern languages is capable of developing the choicest qualities of the human mind : verbal ability, intellectual discipline, appreciation of values and new ideas, creative communication and expression, beyond any purely utilitarian consideration. However, such 'transfer' effects will depend on the choice of adequate instructional strategies.

More particularly the following effects can be enlisted :

a) open-mindedness, i.e. the ability to understand new ideas and different views, to sympathize with and tolerate contrasting opinions, to keep up fresh interests and a live intellectual curiosity ;

b) effective thinking : i.e. the productive use of analytic and synthetic processes, especially with regard to language functioning (as an effect of comparative observation of structures and functions in the native language and in the second language) ;

c) intellectual enrichment : i.e. the acquisition of new knowledge and experience through a wider vocabulary, extensive and intensive reading, the appreciation of aesthetic values and cultural modes inherent in the foreign civilization ;

d) spiritual refinement : i.e. the assimilation of moral values and the appreciation of a 'humane' way of life (Cf. Jespersen, 1904, pp. 11-12; Handrich, in UNESCO, 1955, p. 24; Closset, 1951).

If some of these characteristics can be attained through ample training in one's own native language, "only through a second language can we get a quickened realisation of the way in which words really do express thoughts, and so achieve greater clarity and precision in our own communications. The acquisition of a second language, even at the most elementary level, illumines and teaches the meaning of meaning, furnishes a term of comparison (a yard-stick, if you like) that gives us an insight into the quality of language, letting us grasp what it can and cannot do". (Mallinson, 1957, p. 26).

0.1.2 Development of social consciousness and international understanding.- The study of a second language and culture is a powerful socializing factor which can balance ever emerging individualistic tendencies. Altruism can stem from the recognition of the values of a different culture and from the strengthening of positive relations among individuals and nations. Language is an open window upon the life and the spirit of a people. The teaching of modern languages must contribute to a better appreciation or at least acceptance of different ideologies, customs and ways of life; to the understanding of deep ties between different countries and of their contributions to international thought and cooperation. International-mindedness is a 'must' in all programmes of basic education.

Ultimate aims are achieved through the attainment of specific instructional objectives as mediating variables.

0.2 Specific instructional objectives.- If direct mastery of the foreign language, as contrary to more formal knowledge about the language, is to be considered the appropriate general aim of language study, it follows that such a goal must be translated in terms of 'bilingualism'/'biculturalism'. In Nelson Brooks' words, the issue is between bilingual learning and decoding (Brooks, 1960, p. 105). Effective functional use of the language as a tool for communication implies a set of clear definitions about the instrumental objectives of language learning.

0.2.1 Fallacious aims.- First at all, the ground must be cleared from a number of misunderstandings. It is wrong to postulate the following as legitimate goals :

a) sheer memorization of lists of words out of context;

b) notional information about theoretical grammar;

c) the ability to translate literally from and into the foreign language texts isolated from their global context (both linguistic and situational);

d) performance of pattern drills devoid of situational and realistic meaning;

e) notional information about literature and history of the foreign people;

f) acquaintance with the written variety only of the foreign language.

All these aims deny the functional character of language use in true communicative behaviour.

0.2.2 Short-range objectives.- Psycholinguistic analysis has derived a system of basic skills to be trained in language acquisition and development. Their genetic order is as follows :

a) Listening comprehension : the ear governs the learning and use of speech sounds;

b) oral production : the ability to pronounce foreign sounds correctly, with the right accent, intonation, and rythm; more substantially, the ability to build grammatical and acceptable sentences and to carry on oral conversation;

c) reading : understood not only as mere oral decoding but as recognition of the formal and semantic meaning of written symbols;

d) writing : the ability not only to encode meaning in written symbols but above all to construct written discourse according to the needs of communication.

To these we must add, beyond the conventional classification introduced by methodologists (Brooks, 1960, p. 107), other more refined abilities, namely :

e) Cognitive-linguistic strategies : mental systems of rules that enable the speaker/listener (writer/reader) to programme, select, coordinate, evaluate, regulate new acts of speech;

f) linguistic creativity : the ability to adapt language to ever changing situations for effective communication and to express one's own experiences, feelings, and attitudes with flexibility and originality. This attainment represents the highest level of language mastery: the language user has passed from a state of control by the language to a state of control, of the language.

It is enough to mention here that abilities (e) and (f) are demanded as essential to human communication by considerations of a 'humanistic' nature, contrary to an empiricist and mechanistic view of language behaviour. All truly human behaviour indeed is controlled by consciousness and a certain amount of freedom (creativity).

0.2.3 Long-range objectives.- The firm acquisition of language skills (0.2.2) makes it possible for the learner to go deeper into the marrow of language substance, that is into an appre-

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ciation and - desirably - assimilation of the foreign cultural patterns. Culture and civilization must be understood as an essential part of the language learning programme inasmuch as language derives its fullest meaning and significance from its intrinsic relation with life contents and modalities belonging to the foreign people. Culture and civilization contents are much more than literature, which is but one expression of the spiritual values produced by a nation. It is therefore erroneous to overemphasize the study of literature for its own sake as it was done in the past by many teachers, especially on an advanced study level. A more reasonable approach would consist, on the contrary, in the comprehensive study of the total cultural universe of the foreign people which includes its beliefs and behaviour patterns, its spiritual products and historical achievements as they appear in arts and crafts, in tales and myths, in work and play, in everyday life and professional enterprises, in philosophy, religion, and literature.

Needless to say, this total approach is both synchronic and diachronic : it deals with the present as well as with the past, starting however with the present which represents the learner's immediate sphere of experience.

In conclusion, the thread of the theme developed so far is given by a 'humanistic' perspective in language learning which views education for international communication as a continuous process from language to culture and from culture to Man.

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I. LANGUAGE CONTACT IN A MULTICULTURAL CONTEXT : DIGLOSSIA AND BILINGUALISM

No language system exists in a pure state. Strictly monolingual countries are practically non-existent : intra-linguistic and intra-cultural varieties (sub-codes) are a constant rule. Moreover, due to historical factors, many countries present a composite linguistic picture: low and high languages coexist (superstratum), national and foreign languages have come closer (adstratum), mutual loans and interferences (mixtures or blends) have taken place in course of time. It is therefore not uncommon that in some countries a third language may be added to a state of diglossia and/or bilingualism. To bring one example, in the Italian-German speaking area of Alto Adige people at school may have to learn not only Italian and German but also English or French ('natural bilingualism' and 'educational multilingualism'); the same phenomenon takes place in several other countries both in Europe and in Africa and Asia. On the other hand, and intensely diglossic country like Italy, where hundreds of restricted dialects are spoken side by side with the national language, any other foreign language becomes a third language to be learnt at school. This fact rarely represents an asset to multilingual programmes owing to the fact of frequent deep structural contrasts between the domestic linguistic systems and the foreign one; in some cases, especially in the case of languages belonging to the same family, the possibility of learning transfer may be present to the advantage of the learners.

It is obvious then that in planning a linguistic curriculum the implications of language and culture contact must be taken into account.

1.1 Societal bilingualism and multicultural contexts.

Bilingualism is an essentially individual and psychological phenomenon; however, the gathering of monolingual speakers of different languages or of bilingual speakers into the same community generates a social form of bilingualism (or multilingualism) which cannot but have peculiar effects both on the individual and on the community itself. More synthetically we may speak of 'language contact'.

Diachronic linguistics is interested in societal bilingualism in as much as the historical contact between two language systems inevitably produces changes in one or both systems or even the formation of new systems. Sociolinguistics sees in the dynamics of language contact a mirroring of the complex relations between language and society. Anthropology detects in it the workings of exchanges and contrasts between cultural patterns. Finally, societal bilingualism lies at the root of important political reactions which may take the forms of conflict, co-existence, harmonization, and even the melding of ethnic varieties into a new political unit. All these facets of this complex sociolinguistic phenomenon emerge into a unique educational picture: ethnic bilingualism widens into educational multilingualism thus posing peculiar problems of great relevance for curriculum construction.

The clarification of a few basic ideas is then in order.

1.2 Language contact.

Language contact generates a state of diglossia and/or bilingualism. At the root of bilingualism and diglossia there lie factors of linguistic stability and mobility, responsible for the sociolinguistic equilibrium of a community. One of the major factors of linguistic mobility is interference. The school, above all cultural agencies, must take account of these facts as the chief acculturation agency and primary language engineer. Accordingly reference to the role of the school is implicit in the whole of the following discussion.

A stricter notion of 'language contact' is the one proposed by Weinreich (1964, p. 1): "Two or more languages will be said to be in contact if they are used alternately by the same persons. The language-using individuals are thus the locus of the contact". This contact effects interferences and changes only if the two or more language systems are internalized into the same speaking person.

1.2.1 Form of inter-language contact.

1.2.1.1 Diglossia .- Ferguson (1959) used the term as referred to the use within a single society or community of several separate codes each serving distinct functions and therefore considered as legitimate and complementary - non conflictual -. "This separation was most often along the lines of a H(igh) language, on the one hand, utilized in conjunction with religion, education, and other aspects of high culture, and an L(ow) language, on the other hand, utilized in conjunction with everyday pursuits of hearth, home, and lower work sphere". (Fishman, 1972, p. 92). Therefore, a society is diglossic if it employs "functionally differentiated language varieties of whatever kind" (Gumperz, 1964).

1.2.1.2 Relations between diglossia and bilingualism.

For purposes of simplicity it seems best to represent such relations by means of a four-fold table drawn out by Fishman (1972, p. 93) :

	DIGLOSSIA	
BILINGUALISM	+	-
+	1. Both diglossia and bilingualism	2. Bilingualism without diglossia
-	3. Diglossia without bilingualism	4. Neither diglossia nor bilingualism

For the sake of exemplification :

i) D + B = e.g. Paraguay : Guarani + Spanish; Swiss-German cantons: High German + Swiss German; Arabic world: classical (Koranic) Arabic + vernacular (Egyptian, Syrian, Lebanese, Iraqui, etc.) Arabic (+ sometimes a Western language: French or English); etc. Fishman notes that "rather than becoming fewer in modern times, the number of speech communities characterized by diglossia and the widespread command of diversified linguistic repertoires has increased greatly as a consequence of modernization and growing social complexity" (Fishman, 1972, p. 97; Fishman, 1966).

ii) B - D = e.g. USA: English + other imported languages for intragroup communication. It represents a transitional state ending up eventually with a mixed code (pidginisation, Italian-American, Yiddish-American): that language variety which is fortunate enough to be associated with the "power class" tends to displace the others.

iii) D - B = e.g. countries where elites speak a H language and the masses a L language, not necessarily related to H, for their intragroup purposes (French vs. Provençal; italian vs. Piedmontese or Sicilian; linguistic states of Eastern Europe, India, etc.). As a consequence, demands for secessionism or for equality for submerged languages may arise on the part of lower-class groups as social patterns alter as a result of industrialization and modernization at large. "This - as Fishman remarks - is the pattern of development that may yet convulse many African and Asian nations if their de-ethnicized and westernized elites continue to fail to foster widespread and stable bilingual speech communities that incorporate the masses and that recognize both the official languages of wider communication and the local languages of hearth and home" (Fishman, 1972, p. 102).

iv) - D - B = e.g. only small bands or clans, isolated and undifferentiated speech communities, which are easier to hypothesize than to find. Given the inevitable contact with others and internal diversification, such a case tends to be self-liquidating.

At this point it is difficult to hypothesize which situation is more or less favourable to the introduction of an additional (foreign) language. The writer is willing to suggest the hypothesis that diglossia is a factor of least resistance to an additional language load due to its condition of linguistic and cultural disadvantage. Aspirations for language prestige and language/culture expansion are likely to be stronger in diglossic communities. Secondly, it may be hypothesized that even bilingual societies, where neither language enjoys international or intercultural relevance, may be open to linguistic expansion.

1.2.2 Language maintenance and language shift.

We have instances of language shift when huge populations adopt a new language or variety into their repertoires, whether or not at the same time they also give up a language or variety that they previously used. (Fishman, 1972, Sect. VII). Language shift represents the strongest effect of language contact: a previous bilingual situation generates - by contamination or absorption and deletion - a new monolingual state through a sequence of evolutionary stages.

A general sociolinguistic 'law' may be articulated into two propositions:

a) mutability of linguistic repertoires is a dependent variable of socio-cultural mutability;

b) socio-cultural dominance tends to generate linguistic dominance.

These statements, however, should not be given an absolute meaning: there is no necessary and deterministic relationship between the cultural and the linguistic planes; they do not coincide: in some cases they rather seem to crisscross and even to oppose to each other. The following quotation from Fishman invites us to caution and to abstain from easy generalizations : "It would seem, on one hand, that language maintenance has continued under various and highly different forms of group membership, some of which have involved significant changes in traditional social relationships and in pre-established role-relations. On the other hand, it appears that group loyalty can be similarly (if not more) ubiquitous, continuing both with and without language maintenance". (Fishman, 1972, p. 124; cf. also Weinreich, 1964, p. 100).

Two other statements can be drawn from research (Fishman, 1972, pp. 126-136):

1.2.2.1 Urban dwellers are more inclined to shift, rural dwellers (more conservative and more isolated) are less inclined to shift. Nevertheless it can also be noted that intelligentsia and middle-class elements, both of which are almost exclusively urban, have frequently been responsible for language maintenance under the forms of language revivals, language loyalty movements, and organized language maintenance programmes.

1.2.2.2 The more prestigious language displaces the less prestigious language, meaning not some mystically invariant prestige of a language or variety but rather " the highly variant fates and fortunes of its speakers" (Fishman, 1972, p.136).

1.3 Culture Contact.

The strict relationship between language and culture has been repeatedly emphasized. Language is part of a cultural system, but at the same time it is a reflection and a source of a particular culture. Social behaviour patterns are devoid of meaning if detached from language as a vehicle of thought and action. Consequently language contact produces culture contact.

1.3.1 Culture as a value system.

More currently in language teaching syllabuses speak of the understanding of 'culture and civilization' as part of language study. Anthropologically speaking 'culture' would rather denote the subjective set of judgments and appreciations related to systems of behavioural patterns belonging to a definite population (i.e. knowledge and beliefs, symbols, ideologies, norms and values, ways of life, customs and mentality), whereas 'civilization' would consist in the objective products and attainments of a social, economic, intellectual, and artistic nature reached by a society. Culture and civilization, therefore, express the spiritual and material manifestations of a nation; and language will constitute the chief vehicle, and at the same time the source or mainspring, of such endowments. This does not mean that language expresses necessarily the 'temperament' of a people, as rather daringly was maintained by De Madariaga and clearly refuted by linguists as Bally (De Madariaga, 1931; Bally, 1950). In any case, given the strict relation between cultural contents and linguistic expression, culture must become an essential object of study by language learners.

1.3.2 Relations between language and culture.

The relationship between the two terms is circular: culture feeds language, language stimulates culture. The functional and mutual dependence between these variables expresses itself mainly through two basic processes: language homogenization or standardization, and language differentiation and stratification.

1.3.2.1 Language standardization tends to homogenize expressive patterns for use by a particular speech group. It is based on the criteria of efficiency (maximum adaptation and utilization), rationality (semantic correspondence), and commonality (widest adoption by community members) (Punya Sloka Ray, 1963). Here society appears as language creator.

1.3.2.2 Language differentiation and stratification is particularly important for the foreign language teacher. Dialectal varieties, levels of usage, special languages like jargons and technical codes are significant aspects for choice in instructional programmes and for the right evaluation of normal and abnormal forms (Cf. ch.s 5 & 6).

1.4 Interference as a linguistic and anthropological problem.

Interference between linguistic systems is an important factor in language change. Its relevance is not only sociolinguistic (code alteration) or psycholinguistic (deterioration of individual bilingualism) in nature but also of a pedagogical character (it may become a source of errors and difficulties in second language learning).

We may hypothesize the following varieties of interference :

INTERFERENCE
- UNCONSCIOUS → "error"
- CONSCIOUS
  - NOT DESIRABLE (breaking of the system rules) → "error"
  - ACCEPTABLE (because of its functional or enrichment value)

Such a classification is taxonomic in that it correlates with criteria of linguistic normativity, and therefore it may serve not only to the linguistic analyst in formal evaluation but also to the teacher and testing specialist in evaluating and correcting typical errors to be found in language learning processes.

A few specifications will help perceive the nature and implications of interference.

1.4.1 The nature of interference.

1.4.1.1 The possibility of interference stems from the structural principle of the distinctive character of language systems: linguistic features are pertinent to only one system; therefore, transference or borrowing may result in a change of the target system.

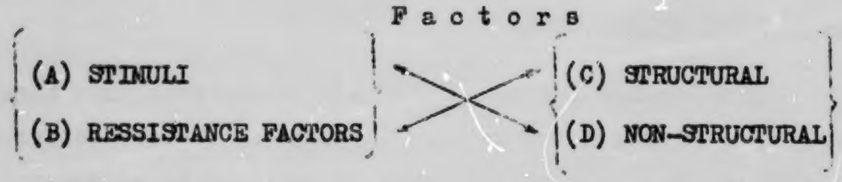
1.4.1.2 Interlinguistic identification may take place on two levels: different units may be erroneously identified either on the level of expression (phonems, morphemes, syntagmemes) or on the level of content (sememes, culturemes). E.g., the expression used by an italian learner "I not see" instead of the correct English sentence "I do not see" is a formal interference, while the undistinction of the Russian noun "nogà" with respect to the English "foot" and "leg" may produce lexical (content) interference.

1.4.1.3 Merging of systems may take place especially in the child or in the illiterate adult thus unconsciously producing a sort of "mixtilingualism". It is the case of 'compound bilingualism' in which two forms (signifiers) correspond to only one content (signified).

1.4.1.4 Both parole and langue are subject to interference, but the origin always lies in the single linguistic act which is subjected to transfer of form or content; a socially generalized change will eventually become part of the system. Synchronic interference breeds diachronic change.

1.4.2 The mechanism of interference.

According to Weinreich (1964, pp. 64-65) the factors of interference can be combined into four categories as follows:



The interplay of factors may result in a variety of combinations. For example :

(AC) any point of divergence between two structured systems can produce interference;

(BC) the peculiar stability of a system or requirements of intelligibility can contribute to stability or preservation of a language;

(AD) the social value of the primary language, the bilingualism of the speakers, the emotional aspects of language, a certain individual inclination toward linguistic blending, etc. can produce interference;

(BD) the social value of the second language, intolerance attitudes towards interference and error, puristic attitudes towards the second language, loyalty to mother tongue, speakers' monolingualism, etc. tend to oppose resistance to change.

Many other problems are open to research : e.g. the role of socio-cultural setting in language contact, the specification of language functions in bilingual groups, congruence of linguistic and socio-cultural divisions, the symbolic value of the standardized language, duration of contact, etc. (cf. Weinreich, 1964, ch. 4). What remains of utmost importance in planning a bilingual curriculum is determining the role of educational institutions in the maintenance or promotion of peaceful co-existence (linguistic-cultural equilibrium) in cases of societal bilingualism or multilingual contexts, and at the same time preventing conflicts with the first language and culture while teaching the second language. Any form of linguistic dictatorship would be baneful to the individual and society especially in the emerging nations.

Close to this aspect is the attitude toward languages up to the point of acceptance or refusal.

1.5 Behavior toward language.

With Fishman (1972, pp. 140 ff) we may recognize three major categories of behaviours towards language as factors contributing to maintenance or change of the first language or to acceptance and refusal of any second language.

1.5.1 Attitudinal-affective behaviours.

Aside from 'language stereotypes' (the "beauty" or "ugliness", the "richness" or "poverty" and alike attributed to one particular tongue) and feelings toward 'typical speakers' of a language, it may be of considerable importance for the language user and language learner to detect the perception and appreciation of the social, cultural, intellectual aspects connected with a particular language. Lambert (1963) reports a positive relationship between success in school-based second language learning and favourable attitudes toward the second language and its speakers. However, this finding need not be paralleled in all natural multilingual contact settings.

1.5.2 Overt behavioural implementation of attitudes.

The possible relationships between language social reinforcement (language planning, learning opportunities and aids), on one hand, and the waxing and waning of actual language use or the improvement of second language programmes and over-all achievement, on the other, need serious investigation. It is known in fact how certain forms of linguistic propaganda have produced negative effects in particular areas. (Some languages are still considered as residues of political imperialism and colonialism).

1.5.3 Cognitive aspects of language response.

Language consciousness, language knowledge, and language-related groupness perceptions may be factors of resistance to change in the first language. But it is possible to conceive of a 'shifting effect' of these factors if related to a second language to be learnt. In other words, the second language will tend to become dominant if vested with these cognitive polarisations. It is the case of permanent immigrants.

However, these aspects are merely hinted at as possible variables : much more research is needed before drawing significant conclusions.

1.6 Some pedagogical problems.

Interlinguistic understanding implies of its very nature intercultural understanding. The basic and crucial problem is to teach language and culture without creating social and psychological conflicts. Imposed bilingualism would beget unhealthy reactions: it would be tantamount to psychological warfare.

The contrastive-comparative analysis ("differential approach") of the first and second languages and cultures seems to afford the best pedagogical as well as psychological results. Linguistic relativism as well as cultural relativism allow evaluation of each language/culture for its own sake and in its own value thus avoiding negative comparison and dangerous 'high-brow' attitudes toward one language or other.

A mature person must be able to identify himself with either language and culture without losing his identity. This is possible, as true bilinguals can testify.

Finally, learning a third language of world-wide prestige and utility should not be considered an impossible task in diglossic and bilingual countries, especially if learning is begun at a rather early age. Once more it must be emphasized that sociolinguistic conflicts are unknown and unconceivable to children. Each child is potentially a multilingual and multicultural being.

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II. CONTRASTIVE PSYCHO-SOCIO-LINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGE TEACHING

2.1 From language contact to linguistic contrast

Language contact in a social setting becomes a problem when it is internalized by the individual learner: contrasts and interferences may generate special difficulties, although not necessarily, in the apprentice learner attempting to step over from his native language and culture into a different one.

Observations concerning many linguistic distortions brought out by some studies of bilingual behaviour (cf. Haugen, 1956; Weinreich, 1964) and attention to the problem of interference in the preparation of language achievement tests (cf. Lado, 1957) warrant at least part of the assumption ruling applied contrastive linguistics as voiced by Lado (1957, p. 2) :

> "Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings, and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture - both productively - when attempting to speak the language and to act in the culture, and receptively when attempting to grasp and understand the language and the culture as practiced by natives".

Contrastive linguistics was born out of this conviction: namely, that difficulties and errors were the result of interference and in an ideal teaching situation could be avoided (Lee, 1970). The difficulties of learners could be predicted by a comparison between the structures of the mother tongue and the target language and appropriate steps could then be taken to minimise the difficulty and reduce the interference by developing contrastive consciousness in the learner and using well-planned preventive exercises.

The body of literature in this field is very large (cf. Gage, 1961; Thiem, 1969), but more recently favour has turned into sharp criticism (Ritchie, 1967; Nemser, 1971; Slama-Cazacu, 1971; Nickel, 1971; Richards, 1971; Dulay & Burt, 1973, 1974; Dusková, 1969; Corder, 1967). The main reasons are :

a) not all difficulties and errors can be traced back to the influence of the mother tongue, and

b) what contrastive analysis predicted as a difficulty did not always in practice turn out to be so.

In other words, the purely theoretical operation of contrastive linguistics appeared to be pointless to some degree.

Therefore, we may not now be as ready to agree with Fries when he stated : "The most effective materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner" (Fries, 1945, p. 9). This principle in fact does not apply with equal force to all learning situations. The tendency to transfer native patterns to a second language appears inversely related to the learner's degree of development in his native language: thus interference phenomena are remarkably fewer in the young child than in the adolescent or the adult student.

The relativity of the contrastive approach in foreign language teaching suggests that :

a) the comparison between native and foreign language should not be insisted on when teaching young learners (this may be utterly confusing);

b) the teacher should not be content with the mere theoretical comparison between the two language systems, but should require a validation of contrastive data on an experimental basis.

2.2 Contrastive studies of languages - an integration

2.2.1 Purport of contrastive analysis.

A balanced view of the nature and significance of contrastive linguistics has been expressed by Nickel (1971, p. 15): "Applied contrastive linguistics does not aim at drawing the pupils' attention constantly and systematically to language contrasts. Its objective, rather, is to aid the textbook author in collecting and arranging his material and to help the teacher in presenting his subject-matter. Both author and teacher require a knowledge of contrastive grammar in order to be able to predict, explain, correct, and eliminate errors due to interference between source and target language. The effect of contrastive linguistics in teaching practice will vary accordingly to teaching objectives and age of the learners. Not all the results of contrastive analyses will be utilizable for practical work".

This view of what contrastive analysis can do for the teacher implies a broader interpretation of its methods which cannot be reduced to mere theoretical (apriori) comparison.

2.2.2 Psycho-socio-linguistic integration.

Not all the difficulties and errors predicted by contrastive analysis turn out to be so in the single case and situation. A contrast may appear so in some students, in some situational contexts, or with some methods used by the teacher. Apriori considerations cannot detect what may result from situations or actual performance. Therefore, psychological and/or sociological empirical evidence will be often needed.

Accordingly we may hypothesize at least two broad categories of methods to be used in contrastive work:

i) analysis on a theoretical level, that is a comparison of two well-known language systems which results in a series of statements that have a potentially predictive value; and

ii) analysis on an experimental basis, which ascertains, defines, confirms or disproves the theoretical predictions already formulated, or corrects and integrates such predictions through suitable testing procedures. At present the first methodological category seems to be still prevailing among linguistic scientists. The 'state of the art' denounces that the situation of 1961 (Gage, 1961) has not undergone any deep change: at that time out of 206 bibliographical items reported by Gage no more than 14 belonged to the category of experimental investigation.

2.2.2.1 Theoretical analysis.- The theoretical procedures of contrastive analysis were clearly and comprehensively outlined by Lado (1957, pp. 12-50). A comparison of sound features should be carried out on three levels : analysis of sound segments, analysis of stress and rythm, and analysis of intonation. A similar stratification of levels can be considered with respect to grammar and lexis. However, this may suffice for a tentative outline of preliminary cautions in the implementation of a particular teaching programme.

2.2.2.2 Experimental analysis.- Maximum effectiveness of contrast-awareness in teaching will demand further control of the learning situation through experimental testing of individual and group variants bound up with the learners' linguistic and extra-linguistic contexts. By experimental approach is meant the use of control and testing procedures commonly employed in scientific research. The methods of research may be described under three headings :

a) the making and recording of observations (with or without apparatus of various kinds) ;

b) the asking of questions (in the search for what is not immediately discernible in a face-to-face interview or a paper and pencil test, and in response to materials and to situations of a variety of types) ;

c) the analysis and interpretation of findings in terms of statistical generalizations as to frequency of occurence on the basis of the most elaborate psychometric and sociometric techniques. (Cf. Lindquist, 1953).

To this effect the testing techniques proposed by Lado (1961) with regard to phonology, grammar, and lexicon can be usefully employed.

One interesting approach from the experimental point of view is "performance analysis", i.e. the study of the learner's language system and his verbal behaviour in order to discover the psychological processes of second language learning : The learner's "transitional competence" approximating him gradually to "second language competence". Such progressing competence, or "interlanguage" (Selinker, 1972), is determined by a few central processes : 'language transfer' or interference from L1 to L2 ; 'transfer of training', teaching-induced (incorrect) hypotheses about the target language ; 'strategies of second language learning' consisting in purely idiosyncratic hypotheses about the target language; 'strategies of second language communication', adopted by the learners when faced with the need to communicate with a less than adequate interlanguage system. Richards (1972), for example, points to 'simplification' as the result of such communication strategies.

There is still a great deal of work to be done in understanding how a learner builds intermediate competence systems and in doing so falls into identifiable errors. "Performance analysis" can bring a distinct contribution to such understanding and integrate the descriptive data of contrastive linguistics.

As a matter of fact, the greatest single help granted to contrastive linguistics in recent years has come from "error analysis", which is a 'performance-oriented approach'.

2.3 Error analysis

2.3.1 Nature and aims of error analysis.

From a pedagogical point of view it is customary to distinguish between lapses of mistakes and errors. The former, common to native speakers, are failures to utilize a known system correctly: they are the result not of a deficiency in 'competence' but of a psychological imperfection in the process of encoding speech. These are of no pedagogical relevance. The latter are typically produced by apprentice learners who do not yet have a full command of a language system. Their recurrence and gravity demand the intervention of preventive or remedial strategies.

Fresh attention has been brought in recent years upon the types and causes of learners' errors both because of their significance in detecting the deep mechanism of language learning and because of their importance for correct and effective guidance in language learning. The pedagogical aim of error analysis is dependent on the theoretical aim, for until we are able to give a linguistic and psycho-socio-linguistic account of the nature and causes of learners' errors in a given second language being learnt we cannot propose pedagogical measures to deal with them.

Generally speaking, linguists tend to see in errors the evidence that the learner is constructing for himself a grammar of the target language on the basis of the linguistic data in the language to which he has been exposed and the help he has received in teaching. This interpretation has been called the "creative construction hypothesis" (Dulay & Burt, 1974). This explains the regularity of typical errors. The individual learner's constructed grammar is an 'approximative system' with regard to the final competence in the target language (Nemser, 1971), or an intermediate system ("interlanguage" : Selinker, 1972).

2.3.2 Classification of errors.

Linguistics has contributed to a more satisfactory classification of errors on a systemic basis related namely to the levels of language description, i.e. errors of orthography or phonology, of morphology or syntax, of vocabulary, of style and within each level according to systems, e.g. vowel or consonant systems, verb or noun features, syntactic patterns, etc. The difficulty, however, lies principally in detecting or evaluating whether a particular form is a real error or a tolerable variant only. One significant trend in evaluation and classification of errors consists in taking 'intelligibility' and 'communicability' as a basic criterion before and more than grammatical correctness.

2.3.3 Evaluation and explanation of errors.

As just said, a fruitful approach to evaluation is to measure the degree of disturbance an error may have on the efficiency of communication in terms of its frequency, generality or comprehensibility (Johanssen, 1973), or to measure its gravity by the degree of tolerance extended to it by native listeners or language teachers (Olsson, 1973, 1974). To establish error gravity an assessment has been proposed (James, 1974) based upon the number and nature of the rules transgressed in order to measure the degree of deviance of an error from the correct target language form. However, it is correct to think that communication as 'transmission of meaning' is more relevant in language encoding than grammatical orthodoxy. Therefore, the above mentioned principle of 'intelligibility' seems to be more critical in error evaluation especially from a pedagogical viewpoint.

Psycho-socio-linguistics enters as a major actor in the problem of explanation. Factors of error are of a psychological nature in that they are connected with language performance. Some factors are of an extra-linguistic nature, as age of learner, learning situation, method of teaching. Others are intra-linguistic: they result from the learning process itself. Such are incorrect forms of generalization by analogy or attempts at simplification of rules and patterns. The learner is seen at large as hypothesizing false concepts in constructing his own grammar.

Work on error analysis is very large and expanding. The most recent comprehensive bibliography on the subject (Valdam, 1975) lists no less than 246 separate case studies covering errors made principally by learners of English, French, German, and Spanish.

2.4 Pedagogical implications.

Indications of pedagogical relevance following from the studies in contrastive linguistics and error analysis fall generally into three categories:

a) the problem of prevention and correction;

b) the design of syllabuses and remedial programmes;

c) and the writing of pedagogical grammars.

Points b) and c) are long-range objectives and demand much thinking in the field of applied linguistics. They depend very much on further progress of "performance analysis". Particularly, as far as pedagogical grammars are concerned, there do exist grammars based on error analysis, especially for English (see Burth & Kiparsky, 1972; Zydatiss, 1974).

A more immediate aim is the solution of the problems of error prevention and correction.

2.4.1 Prevention of errors.

A suggestion made (George, 1972, p. 62) would indicate that tolerance of errors is, indirectly, a factor in their prevention. Many errors are the result of generalization from inadequate experience. Comprehension of the general background to error production, abundance of well-selected exercise, selection of early learning items by course designers (with high frequency of occurrence and avoidance of interference-producing forms) are some effective practical principles. By and large none of the principles derived from a broad psychology of learning (Titone, 1971) should be overlooked.

2.4.2 Remedial work.

If time given to remedial work is not given to other important work, it seems advisable that before intervening to direct learners' efforts to remedying errors, thought should be given to the economics of intervention (George, 1972, p. 73). Unsuccessful remedial work is very depressing to the learner. On the other hand, errors not causing serious impairment of communication should not trouble the teacher. There may be two common strategies to classroom remedial work: one is derived from the behaviour modification approach insisting on building associational chains of correct forms and reinforcing correct performance; the other has a cognitive basis and aims at leading the student to comprehension of the reasons of the error made. Probably a blending of the two approaches may bring good results, although the former might be more practical with children whereas the latter might appeal more to adolescent and adult students who prefer rational procedures. Good solutions will depend as much on understanding of language learning processes as on practical experience with individuals or groups of students.

It may be useful to close this section by reporting a summary of useful points stemming from the essential steps in remedial work laid down by George (1972, p. 80):

"1. Identifying and listing unwanted forms.

2. Selecting from the list a limited number of unwanted forms for remedial work, taking into account the time available, the likelihood of success within that time, the motivation of the learner, the frequency of occurrence of the error, the severity of the impairment of communication, the consequences (if any) for the learner of having his English characterized by error.

3. Studying each error selected for remedial action, to

isolate the reasons for its occurrence, and, if and where necessary and possible, preparing material for the reteaching, with a different approach, of the grammatical and/or conceptual basis of the wanted form.

4. Deciding organization and classroom strategy, especially and in the first instance, deciding whether to direct remedial work to spoken and/or written English.

5. Choosing or constructing remedial material for the specific errors.

6. Fitting into the teaching programme and classroom work sustained attention to errors."

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III. PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL ASPECTS OF BI/MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION .

3.1 Bilingualism and bilingual education as cultural goals.

3.1.1 International linguistic communication implies adequate command of at least one second language on the part of the members of each national community. This second language must obviously enjoy sufficiently large recognition and acceptance. However, it may be subject to debate whether mastery of this language should be both on the receptive and on the productive sides, or on the receptive side only. In the opinion of the present writer receptive knowledge of a second language would be a sufficient, although limited and provisional, step towards international understanding.

The ideal goal of second language learning has a definite and nowadays attractive name: bilingualism. By bilingualism we may mean, in general terms, a dynamic psychological state of an individual speaker consisting of a double linguistic competence. In actual fact, however, bilingualism is not an absolute state, implying equal or total bilingual competence ("equilingualism"), as such a condition is practically impossible (Mackey, 1956; Balkan, 1970); it is a relative state, implying sufficient competence in the second language, limited to particular functions, varieties, or levels of communicative use.

In any case, bilingual command, albeit heterogeneous in itself, remains a worthy cultural goal, an enrichment of both the single individual and the entire community.

3.1.2 Bilingual education implies three concepts :

a) the inclusion of a language study programme in the general education curriculum;

b) the early school training of a child in a second language (from Kindergarten or, at least, primary school);

c) the use of a second language as a vehicle of school instruction at different educational levels (from primary school to university).

The three notions are covered overlappingly by two forms: namely, early bilingual education (in childhood) and belated bilingual education (during adolescence and adulthood). However, it is commonly acknowledged - as it will appear from the following discussion - that the optimum form is represented by early bilingual education. This conviction explains the widening attention payed by many educationists to the problem of early foreign language instruction. The interest of Unesco in this regard was largely due to the initiative of the late Felix Walter, Unesco programme specialist for modern languages. He wrote in the early sixties (in Stern, 1967, p. ix) :

> "The question, though not completely new in some countries, is genuinely contemporary. It is the language problem in the world today, whether in Asian and African countries that have to struggle with local vernaculars, new national languages and foreign languages of wide communication at the same time, or in Europe or North America where language needs can be more selective. Briefly put this question is, should foreign language instruction begin much earlier than it does now in most educational systems; if so, when and how should it be carried out? This problem first came to the attention of Unesco at the time of the Nuwara Eliya Seminar (August 1953) whose Director was a leading figure in the United States in the movement known as FLES (Foreign Languages in the Elementary School)..."

It was the beginning of a widespread action in favour of research and experimentation in the field which was promoted also by the renewed efforts of Unesco's associated Institutes, like the Unesco Institute for Education in Hamburg, and of national centres in many different countries and continents.

3.2 Early bilingual education

It may be useful at this point to summarize a few considerations concerning the main reasons favouring early bilingualism and a few consequences of a pedagogical nature.

3.2.1 Neuropsychological reasons favouring early bilingualism.

We may mention some basic aspects of neurolinguistic and psycholinguistic evidence and the specific question of the optimum age to start second language learning.

i) Neurolinguistic evidence.- Lenneberg's clinical approach (Lenneberg, 1967), Penfield's indirect evidence from neurosurgery (Penfield, 1953; Penfield and Roberts, 1959), Glees' suggestions from experimental neurology (Glees, 1961) point to a few important facts, notwithstanding some opposition (e.g. Milner, 1960) :
- the human brain is not pre-determined to any language in particular, it is therefore apt and ready for learning any language and more than one language;
- the limited plasticity and capacity of the brain in time suggest that the sensori-motor aspects of language - which are dependent on certain neuroanatomical processes - are more perfectly acquired, even in a second language, at an early age. Since the total receptor and effector capacity of the human organism is limited neuro-biologically, this limitation demands the development of multilingual competence as early as possible.

ii) Psycholinguistic evidence.- Psychological opinion, although still demanding further experimental evidence, generally agrees on the popular belief that the young child not only possesses special powers of imitation but also greater flexibility, greater spontaneity and fewer inhibitions, more direct motivation than the adolescent or adult in attacking a second language. Much of present experimentation on early bilingual education confirms such a belief (Lambert, 1970). More specifically, it is widely held that for second language learning in the early years the same principles and factors as for first language acquisition apply : for example, listening and comprehension coming before utterance, absence of rational or abstract logical learning, skill acquisition through imitation, conditioning and memorizing, communicating as related to a total, personal and social situation, learning to speak as a response to an innate drive to communicate, to a social urge to exercise linguistic skills, and to verbal curiosity.

Of course, such presuppositions require further verification with regard to first language acquisition, and they must be taken accordingly with an open critical attitude especially in the attempt to apply them to second language learning.

iii) The question of the "optimum age".- It is advisable to quote here the relativistic position taken by the Hamburg Conference members, 1962, (in Stern, 1967, p. 20), in stating that : "it is not necessary to justify the teaching of languages in the primary years on the grounds that it is the optimum period". It is more pertinent

a) to show that it is socially and educationally desirable;

b) to prove that it is sound from the point of view of the development of children, and that there are no contra-indications on psychological grounds for teaching a second language at this stage; and

c) to confirm that the learning of languages in the early years may have certain special merits. "In other words, instead of searching for the optimum-age-in-general, it should be sufficient to show that the primary years are a good period for beginning a second language, offering certain special advantages".

On the other hand, just as there are no absolute reasons evidencing beyond any doubt the advantages of early learning over late learning, in the same way the objections so far brought up against the advisability of early second-language learning are devoid of real cogency (cf. the counter-arguments outlined by Burstall, 1975, and Macnamara, 1976).

3.2.2 Socio-pedagogical reasons favouring early bilingualism.

It is clear that the issue on early bilingualism boils down to the conviction that,

a) there are no negative effects deriving from it, and
b) there seem to be some positive effects of remarkable value.

i) Bilingualism and mental health.- That bilingualism is the source of emotional maladjustment, personality disorders, shizophrenic symptoms is an as old as totally ungrounded opinion. It was spread by some German racial theorists (Epstein, Blocher, Ries, Gali, Sander, etc.). On the contrary, as Weiss (1937) had already observed, the psychological integrity of the bilingual person suffers not from the clash against linguistically established conceptual systems but from a general insecurity derived from external conditions of life. As Spoerl and Fishman confirmed, the bilingual individual's difficulties are of a social, not psychological nature in their origin (Spoerl, 1946; Fishman, 1951). Current research on the relation between early bilingualism and ego development carried on by Titone (1976) brings further evidence to the conviction that the structure of a bilingual personality is perfectly normal.

ii) Bilingualism and intelligence.- Most of the investigations on this point carried out during the 1920's are today considered not significant for several scientific reasons. Their negative results cannot therefore be accepted at their face value (see a critical review of a number of them in Titone, 1972, pp. 99-104). More reliable and stimulating are the investigations carried out by Peal and Lambert in Canada, and by Balkan in Switzerland (Peal and Lambert, 1962; Balkan, 1970). Bilingual children, in the Canadian group, showed very significant results on both verbal and non-verbal intelligence tests. In Balkan's group, bilinguals were decidedly superior in all intelligence tests, and in verbal and perceptive plasticity. It seems, therefore, that a second language becomes a powerful educational stimulus, especially if learnt at an early age (befor age 4).

iii) Bilingualism and educational achievement.--Is there a clearly definable learning transfer from bilingualism to achievement in mathematics and language arts? The answer is generally "yes". The results of some investigations are reported by Macnamara (1966), Lambert et al. (1970), and Cohen (1969). What is particularly important is that the study of a second language, instead of proving a hindrance to development in the first language, usually becomes a positive factor enhancing a deeper grasp of the structure of the first language.

iv) Bilingualism and social education .- Bilingualism is the gate to biculturalism. There is no doubt that today's fundamental education must include internationalization as an aspect of social education. Bilingual/bicultural education, to have meaning and effectiveness, must be sufficiently deep-seated and long-range. It must be deep, in order to produce vital assimilation of international attitudes. It must be protracted over a long period, because linguistic skills and cultural attitudes need time for being adequately bred into the child.

The problem, however, takes on different features according to the varying local situations. In some countries or regions in which two or several languages are spoken, a second language is needed as a lingua franca which will serve as a common medium of communication or instruction (e.g. Nigeria, Indonesia, etc.). In other countries a second language is needed because there are two or more official languages. In a third group of countries - perhaps the largest - a second language is needed if cultural, economic and other contacts with the outside world are to be maintained. Finally, in those countries where the national language is one of the world languages (e.g. English, Russian, French), the teaching of foreign languages is considered a necessary part of education for political, cultural, economic or other reasons. Incidentally, migration poses a special problem on second language training which is far from having been solved.

In any case, second language learning today is a "must" for general compulsory education programmes, not only for specialized programmes of instruction.

3.2.3 Spontaneous learning vs. systematic instruction.

The particular psychological nature of the language learning process in childhood determines the general methodological approach in the early teaching of a second language. The relatively unselfconscious command of the second language is the specific contribution that can be expected from linguistic education of children at the primary level. It is therefore rather inappropriate to speak of formal language instruction at this level: the learning process resembles more that of quasi-unconscious absorption of language habits and skills through spontaneous communication efforts in real-life situations than that of rational or conceptual adquisition through rules and drills.

Spontaneity is then the key-principle in guiding learning activities. This approach consists in "the exposure of children to the second language in real-life situations which exclude the use of L1. The pupil is plunged into a 'language bath' in the same way as he found himself immersed in the linguistic environment of his native tongue as an infant. The expectation with this technique is that he hears the language spoken under conditions of ordinary communication and that he is forced to respond and to repeat the phrase previously quoted, that he crosses the language barrier before he even knows that there is one" (Stern, 1967, pp. 85-86). This work, while it banns formal grammar and systematic drilling, and worse translation, will rely on informal play, dialogues, dramatizations, tales, dance, mime, puppets, and film or filmstrip projections. At the same time it will remain constantly and strictly tied to the child's spontaneous interests and activities, to his immediate needs of verbal communication in ordinary situations, and it will extend to include also the other areas of school work, including art, music, literature, geography, science, social studies and arithmetic. Hence the functional value of the second language will emerge most clearly in the child's mind thus becoming a powerful motive for progressive learning.

However, if it is necessary to emphasize the playful character of second language learning in childhood, one should not forget that a minimum of systematicity is required in order to attain productive end-results in teaching. Systematic features of the course will be: a definite selection and grading of vocabulary and structures, based on frequency and communicative functional value; primacy given to the oral aspect; the planning of meaningful language units and speech patterns simulating real-life situations; an operational model of language teaching units or lessons which include well-programmed situations, objects, stimuli, aids, and active participation on the part of the individual child; the definition of short-range and long-range objectives and the provision of adequate means of control (testing) of different levels of achievement.

These typical variables of early language learning should be kept in mind when dealing with the problem of pedagogical strategies and tactics (see Chapters VI and VII).

3.3 Related bilingual education.

As was repeatedly pointed out, bilingualism can be acquired also at a later age. But no doubt late learning presents some important differences that should not be disregarded.

3.3.1 Second language learning at a later age.

Age remains an indisputable variable in learning a number of abilities both of a cognitive and of behavioural nature. It is the object of differential language pedagogy to discuss some of the most obvious differences due to the age factor.

1). Differences between early language acquisition and late language learning.- There have been several studies in recent years which have discussed whether a person learning a second language employs the same process as a person learning his/her first language. Opinions differ. A very recent position taken by J. Macnamara (1976) would deny the existence of such differences, but with rather weak counter-arguments. This position was preceded by theorists in the past who tended to identify the two processes in all respects; hence the literal interpretation of the so-called "natural method" of language teaching (advertized at the end of the 19th century). Some other theorists think that the process of second language adquisition is altogether different from the child's language development in the mother tongue. Yet a solid body of opinion points toward a partial identification only of the two processes: there seem to exist differences as well as similarities that should be taken into account in teaching (Titone, 1964, pp. 18-19).

There is a first critical difference when we consider language learning in infancy and later learning in adolescence or adulthood: second-language learning is what we make it, whereas first-language learning is rarely planned or controlled. A second difference is in the nature of reinforcement control: in second-language learning we must rely on such weak reinforcers as a nod, a smile, a little approval, a grade, while the infant learning his mother tongue is conditioned and supported by primary reinforcers, such as food, affective relations with his parents, need to communicate in vital matters. A third difference derives from the fact that the student learning a second language begins with a highly articulate verbal repertory. This may constitute an asset as well as a liability in that the two systems may partly coincide but often actually conflict, as contrastive analysis has abundantly evidenced. The fourth difference lies in the nature of discrimination learning. The second-language larner does not follow a gradual process in attaining the ability to discriminate sounds or structures, since, unlike the infant, he has had extensive discrimination training and is essentially faced with the task of "concept attainment" as a process of transfer of earlier discriminative behaviours. Antecedent language learning represents an important premise to all successive learning. A fifth difference depends on the higher development of cognitive structures in the older learner's mind that may enhance conscious assimilation of the language and those that H.E. Palmer used to call "studial capacities". A sixth difference is connected to the learner's degree of social development and cultural fixation which may either create in him positive attitudes vis-à-vis the foreign culture or determine negative attitudes (chauvinism, nationalism, racism, etc.)

There are most likely more differences than the ones pointed out by H. Lane (1962) and by Titone (1964), but it is enough to underscore the undeniable fact that a different psychological approach in learning entails of necessity a different methodological approach in teaching. To quote one more significant and conclusive statement (Dodson, 1962, pp. 33-37): "The second language learner relies initially on concepts thought in his native language when he is learning the meaning of foreign language statements he hears. Only after repeated practice and application of the foreign language statements does he begin to rely less and less on concepts thought in his mother tongue, until eventually he is able to 'think' in his second language... The process which the second-language learner undergoes is therefore not the process which the first-language learner undergoes".

2). Important positive factors: motivation, aptitude, time. The dearth of longitudinal studies on success in language study does not allow universally valid conclusions on the factors underlying achievement. However, a few safe statements can be made about what appear to be the most important factors in successful language acquisition.

A) 'Motivation' appears to be the primary factor according to various investigations (summarized by C. Burstall, 1975). Specific motivational factors would be :

a) 'Integrative' vs. 'instrumental' motivation: combination of the results of different research data leads to the conclusion that both the utilitarian value of the achievement of proficiency in the foreign language and the tendency to self-identification with the members of the foreign linguistic community are - together or separately - a key to success in foreign-language learning.

b) Contact with the foreign culture: it seems that especially individuals endowed with 'empathic capacity' develop a greater desire to study the foreign language particularly as a spoken code if brought into contact with the foreign country through visits.

c) Socio-economic factors: positive attitudes towards the foreign language and culture seem to be correlated with higher socio-economic status, perhaps due to the fact of greater parental support and encouragement in approaching new school experiences.

d) Sex differences: sex differences in achievement favouring the girls have been evident in several researches, although this may be tied to children of lower socio-economic status; results may be different and favour boys, particularly on the secondary school level, once language proficiency is perceived as a 'pay-off' value.

e) Classroom situation: the small school seems to favour achievement due to the different atmosphere characterized by co-operative behaviour among pupils and closer contact between teacher and pupils.

f) Teacher-pupil interaction: teachers' high expectations and positive attitudes towards the foreign language and culture, no less than their enthusiasm in the project, seem to be clearly correlated with pupils' success.

g) The presentation of material: methods of presenting language-learning material should vary according to the stage of learning reached, the nature of the material itself, the ability, maturity and modality preferences of the learner, considering especially the positive effect of multi-censory modalities and of devices inducing active pupil participation.

B) 'Linguistic aptitude' is the second major factor for success in language learning, according to - albeit limited - experimental data. J.B. Carroll (1960, pp. 13-14) in summarizing his and others' experiences, states: "Extensive studies of my own have shown considerable individual differences in aptitude for learning foreign languages. This is true of young children as well as adolescents and adults. Even if it should be found that young children learn languages faster than older children, there are many who will have real difficulty. Reports typically say that 10 to 20 percent of children have special disability for FL learning even under what appear to be excellent learning conditions". And he adds further on: "It would seem that FL learning ability is almost a special talent like musical or artistic ability (but independent of these, of course)."

According to Carroll, "Language aptitude as measured by tests seems to consist of at least four identifiable abilities:

a) phonetic coding - the ability to 'code' auditory phonetic material in such a way that this material can be recognized, identified, and remembered over something longer than a few seconds;

b) grammatical sensitivity - the ability to recognize the grammatical functions of words in sentence contexts;

c) rote memorization ability - the ability to learn a large number of associations in a relatively short time;

d) inductive language learning ability - the ability to infer linguistic forms, rules, and patterns from new linguistic content itself with a minimum of supervision or guidance" (Carroll, 1961, ch. 4).

Recent research confirms the utmost importance of auditory ability for success in language learning. This is defined by Pimsleur (1963) as "the ability to receive and process information through the ear", and it would include at least two components: sound discrimination and sound-symbol association.

One important point to be made here is that different individual abilities are not only the complex by-product of biologically transmitted capacities, but especially the result of the type and amount of "learning which occurs at particular stages of life" (Ferguson, 1954, 1956): abilities are developed through overlearning. This applies undoubtedly to language learning ability.

A prognostic test like Carroll and Sapon's MLAT (Modern Language Aptitude Test) may help the instructor not so much to select able candidates as to apply the right strategy for maximum exploitation of basic linguistic aptitude, particularly with underachievers (Cf. Carroll, Sapon, Richards, 1954; Carroll, Sapon, 1959).

C) 'Time' is another important variable, in the sense of the total amount of time spent actively in the learning situation (Carroll, 1963). The reason is that language learning is basically a developmental process very similar to maturation: the entire organism is deeply involved in a process of transformation and organization of communication abilities at various layers of human personality (Titone, 1973). This explains, consequently, why a longer period of time, starting from as early an age as possible, devoted to language instruction will bring better results. However, it may be suggested, according to the present writer's speculations, that while children will benefit from a more extended period of time in order to be able to 'digest' new behavioural materials like language skills, adults will be able to profit from more intensive courses due to their higher degree of transfer ability. At a later age carefully planned intensive courses have shown to be very fruitful (see later on, ch. VI)

3.3.2 Systematic instruction vs. spontaneous learning.

What has been said about late language learning points to the conclusion that later age demands a different teaching approach. The belief that adults cannot learn a second language without systematic instruction is now supported by several interesting studies on adult language learning (Krashen and Seliger, a & b, 1976; Krashen, Seliger and Hartnett, 1976; Krashen, Jones, Zelinski and Usprich, 1976). 'Systematic' instruction should not be confused with 'formal' instruction: the former implies careful planning of situations, materials and procedures, while the latter restricts work on the rational or notional level, as in the case of traditional teaching of formal grammar. A great deal of confusion has come out in methodological debates from lack of a precise distinction between the two types of approach. The teacher ought to keep in mind that systematicity goes very well hand in hand with concreteness and practicality.

Systematicity is a principle of intellectual economy: it makes for fast and effective learning without wasting an excessive amount of time and energy; it is synonymous with 'programming'. Selecting, grading, presenting adequately, providing for cyclic repetition of the material, lexical and structural, of a linguistic course ensures efficient order and organization of learning sequences (cf. Mackey, 1965). On the other hand, 'formal' systematization of language materials is not necessary for effective learning at any age, even in adult age, for there is no direct transfer of learning from abstract conceptualization ('formalization') to practical ability of language use; whereas language, being essentially a behavioural system, is learnt more properly through 'functional' systematization, that is through the acquisition of communicative skills instrumental to successful communication in concrete life-situations.

Therefore, the emphasis of teaching should be placed on planned instruction, integrated more and more with spontaneous activities of realistic communication.

It may be worth adding - to further clarify the notion of 'functional' systematicity - that the type of language to be taught should be conformed to realistic paradigms of sociolinguistic usage. In other words, the level and variety of of the second language should be equal to the learners' actual communicative behaviour in the first language. If the learner uses a low type of 'elaborated code' (Bernstein, 1971) in his native settings, it would be inappropriate to teach him a high type of 'elaborated code' in the second language. Suggestions to this regard may come from Paulo Freire's ideas of a popular educational approach with its reflections on the so-called "grammar of the oppressed" (Peters, 1977). Social and political realism has been the 'missing link' in many foreign language programmes.

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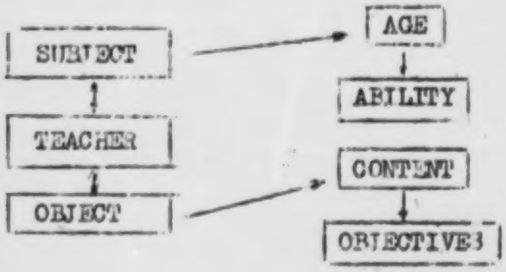
IV. LANGUAGE VARIETIES - LANGUAGE FOR SPECIAL PURPOSES AND LEVELS

A working approach to language teaching must refuse the abstract consideration of the 'object' (the language) and the 'subject' (the learner) as two monolithic blocks. Both the language and the learner are in reality differentiated in themselves.

4.1 A methodological frame of reference: language differences and learner differences.

In the process of language teaching-learning the teacher is the professional mediator between two essential variables: the object to be learnt - the subject who decides to learn. The following diagram may serve to illustrate this relationship :



(The arrows indicate 'logical generation' of process factors).

Language is not a uniform and unarticulated system. The learner is not a stable but a complex and changing organism. It is therefore important in educational planning to take account of the intrinsic differences of both object and subject in order to adapt methods and techniques to the concrete reality of learning.

4.2 Language varieties and language levels.

Each language is a multiple system of communication including a number of sub-systems or varieties of usage and levels of social acceptance. No learner, especially in a beginning state, is able to assimilate the whole of a language system. A crucial choice is then necessary in planning a curriculum of language study. From a sociological point of view there appear to be structural differentiations within the system (dialects, registers, styles) and levels or degrees of refinement and complexity in usage. From a psychological point of view the language can be acquired at different degrees or levels of proficiency.

4.2.1 Functional levels.

The internal differences within each language system may be due to

a) time (words, constructions, and styles change, are born, and die out through lapses of time),

b) place (differences in words, pronunciations, stress, phrasing, and grammatical habits characterize fairly definite regions and are called regional dialects).

There are differences between speaking and writing (both with regard to vocabulary and grammar). There are differences due to use (certain words or constructions cannot be used interchangeably in all situations; their quality depends on the social situations in which they have been and are predominantly used).

Such varieties dependent on use can be divided into four classes, particularly for teaching convenience (Kenyon, 1948, with regard to the English language) :

i) General Language .- Most speaking and writing situations call for a general language, the great central body of words and constructions of a language, having wide currency in both speech and writing. Its use is practically unlimited.

ii) Formal Language.- It is typically found in writings of mature interest, intended for circulation among a somewhat restricted group of people having general or specialized intellectual interests. Words are frequently abstract. Sentences are well-constructed and completed. In short, it is a somewhat elaborate language. Its use is obviously limited.

iii) Informal Language.- It presupposes a regular relationship of some sort between user and receiver. Most conspicuously it uses words and phrases characteristic of familiar conversation, or words of special currency at the moment, informal coinages for common things or situations. It cares less for grammatical completeness since part of the meaning is furnished by the situation or common experience. Its use is limited.

General, Formal, and Informal Language together make up what is known as Standard Language.

iv) Nonstandard Language.- It is the everyday speech of many people, relatively untouched by school instruction or by the tradition of the printed language (Bloomfield, 1927). It is restricted to people of lower education and social class. It is primarily spoken. Complex ideas and dignified subjects cannot be discussed adequately in the vocabulary and with the grammar of Nonstandard language. It is, briefly, a code restricted in its formal organization and limited in its use to low-class people (Bernstein, 1970).

What language variety should be taught? Of course, Standard Language, which means 'good language'. The basis of good language is set by the purpose of communication, that is by the appropriateness of the word or expression to the immediate purpose. Appropriateness is related essentially to the subject talked or written about and the situation, to the listener or reader, and to the speaker or writer. It will be the burden of Socio-linguistics to state and describe the appropriate forms of language according to the constituents of communication: viz. subject and situation, encoder, and decoder.

4.2.2 System varieties.

While functional levels of usage characterize a speaker as literate or belonging to a high or low class from a socio-cultural point of view, varieties within the language system, from as it were a horizontal angle, characterize the structure of the language used. Within each language there are differences due to: i) dialect, ii) register, and iii) style.

i) Dialect.- It is specified by the geographical ares where the language is spoken. The American varieties of spoken English, Spanish, Portuguese and French differ from the European. In England the speech of the North differs from that of the South. American English differs from British English.

ii) Register.- It indicates the uses to which a language is put - occupational, emotive, informative. The language taught may be needed for commercial, scientific or military purposes. There are, accordingly, courses in Business English, German for science students, Russian for engineers, and the like.

iii) Style.- It is the particular modality of personalized usage. It is common not only to the sophisticated writer but also to the illiterate, unskilled labourer.

Of course, style cannot be taught. It may be imitated by the beginning learner who tries to reproduce the personal speech modalities of his teacher. On the other side, dialect and register are inevitable specifications of a particular language system, and must be taught in the sense, at least, that they must be pointed to as differentiations characterizing actual usage. The choice between British English and American English, between European French and Canadian French, between European Spanish and Latin-American Spanish, to bring only some salient examples, is inevitable at the outset of a language-teaching programme. The same should be said in connection with the teaching of a special register, particularly from a professional viewpoint.

4.2.3 Levels of proficiency.

Psychologically speaking, the degrees of attainment in language acquisition should be measured up against a set of goals characterizing the mounting ladder of achievement. In this respect it is customary to speak of an initial (beginners'), intermediate, and advanced level.

i) Initial level.- It is also called "Threshold level". It covers the fundamentals of skill learning, giving preeminence to the oral skills and to the assimilation of basic grammar and lexicon.

ii) Intermediate level.- It aims at completing grammatical competence and developing general vocabulary. Reading may become a dominant skill to be more amply developed.

iii) Advanced level.- While oral work is never totally abandoned, the written language becomes the major object of study. Difficult prose and literature rightly deserve their full recognition at this level. Specialized language (professional, scientific registers, and alike) should be taught particularly at this third level.

One important principle related to these levels of attainment is the need for continuity. As pointed out by Brooks (1960, p. 118), "Ideally the student should feel a steady advance as he goes from one level to another and from one type of institution to another. Language learnings are cumulative, and there is constant need to relate what is being learned to the whole field of what is already known".

4.3 Language for special purposes.

Foreign language teaching has increasingly become a part of the training of professional groups, especially in emerging countries. New courses and materials have accordingly been developed by several agencies to meet the demands of such groups.

These programmes (cf. for example the C.R.A.P.E.L. experimental courses: Duda et al., 1975) have considered several basic issues like the following :

- lexical, grammatical, and functional selection and progression in relation to language and communication skills;
- the use of authentic materials;
- autonomisation and individualization of language acquisition;
- and finally the complex issue of whether the language teacher should be acquainted or not with the technical or scientific content of the material used in such courses.

4.3.1 Professional and scientific uses.

Various experiments have pointed out that there are two possible ways of teaching a specialized variety of the language, namely:

a) working directly on the technical or scientific texts in order to bring out their peculiar characteristics with regard to grammatical structure and vocabulary: this would amount to training merely in reading comprehension;

b) providing for training in the 'general' language only during the first intensive period, and postponing any specialized instruction in the technical or scientific variety.

A distinction, however, ought to be made as regards scientific or technical language. In many cases technicians need also training in the ability to actively communicate in the special language: this entails more groundwork on the basic language skills, both oral and written. On the other side, the need to understand scientific texts as is usual with researchers or university students may be met with simply by developing adequate reading comprehension. In this case two factors are of primary importance : the use of authentic reading material and the possibility for the student to work autonomously. The teacher, as the level increases, is felt to need desirably a scientifically oriented background in order to be able to reach overall text comprehension. Some experts advocate a multimedia approach: the strictly written comprehension approach should be supplemented by the addition of films treating scientific or technical subjects, by the presentation of charts, graphs, etc., promoting word-concept connection, and by listening to recorded conferences, music, radio broadcasts, etc.

4.3.2 A special case: second languages for migrants.

In many European and non-European countries language instruction to migrant workers is at present a very crucial problem. Beside a number of interventions on the part of the Council of Europe, some recent studies have underscored the complexity of this problem and some possible solutions (e.g. Catani, 1973, Lagarde & Vigier, 1974).

Some conditions or pre-requisites which may warrant adequate results in second-language programmes for migrant workers are as follows :

a) Instruction must be based not so much on a strictly pedagogical relation between teacher and learner as on a true humane 'rapport' which should create first of all a democratic atmosphere in the classroom.

b) It is important to activize learning by creating the conditions for self-instruction and complete real-life experience so that language learning may be viewed as a total experience in the foreign environment (Titone, 1969).

c) Training must aim at instrumental communicative competence. The migrants' life needs, their working situations must become the basic text for language drilling. Shaping and re-shaping what they pick up from the environment in order to better their communicative ability in the second language is more important and effective than indoctrination in the foreign grammar and vocabulary detached from everyday life.

d) The skills related to oral and written comprehension, and to oral and written expression, must be developed not so much by pattern practice as by situational attempts to communicate. A functional-pragmatic approach will combine flexibility with systematicity.

4.4 Learner differences.

The learner's personality is a complex network of different traits and assets which require careful and flexible adaptation of instructional strategies. Individualized instruction in foreign languages has been emphasized only too recently (Altman, 1973; Altman & Politzer, 1973). But it is urgent to draw the language teachers' attention on the fact that language learning, at any age level, is the function not only of methods of instruction and materials but above all of the individual dispositions (readiness) of the learner.

4.4.1 Individual differences in language learning.

The modalities and results of language learning are conditioned by such factors as: age, aptitude, motivation, personality characteristics. Generally and comprehensively speaking age is a global factor - understood psychologically as 'developmental age' - which summarizes all other subjective conditions. Aptitude, interests, and attitudes, personality structure differ according to psychological age. Even social conditionings upon the individual work differently as age varies. Therefore, it may be convenient to examine very briefly the learning of a second language (L2) as conditioned by difference in age.

4.4.2 Young children as L_2 learners.

Considerations should proceed in two directions: psychological assets and instructional programming.

4.4.2.1 Psychological background.

i) Motivation .- The young child appears to be endowed with adequate sources of motivation for any kind of experiential learning as the acquisition of languages. These sources are mainly of two categories: verbal curiosity leads the child to explore the universe of words; urge to socialization urges the child to communicate.

ii) Linguistic aptitude.- The difficulty in detecting linguistic aptitude at an early age makes it compulsory that, aside from subnormal individuals, no premature selection should be made among the prospective learners of the new language. Moreover, it is a well-grounded opinion that the majority of normal children can learn more than one language.

iii) Types of learning.- Rational or abstract-logical instruction cannot be imposed on the young child. His level of consciousness allows prevalently a kind of 'playful learning' in which action is the overall basis of language use in real situations.

4.4.2.2 Pedagogical indications.

i) The 'What' of language teaching.- "In selecting the contents for the language programme, preference should be given to situations that are of interest to children everywhere. The language to be used in talking about the situations should be the authentic language of the native speakers. The limited but progressively growing ability of the children to express themselves in a new medium should be given consideration, however. Cultural topics and language items chosen for inclusion should be intimately related. The same ones may be reintroduced in each grade, but always on a higher level of complexity". (Finocchiaro, 1964, p. 56). This method is callet the "spiral method". According to it the same topic - the classroom, for example - may be discussed at the beginning level and at any level thereafter. Thus in each wider circle - which coincides, of course, with the growing maturity of the children - the sentences are longer and more complex; the vocabulary is both more varied and more precise; relationships between objects, people, or cause and effect are also expressed.

Selection of the language material should follow the standards of child language. The child should learn only that variety of the foreign language which is actually used by children of his same age.

ii) The 'How' of effective language teaching.- Experience with children learning foreign languages has shown a series of procedures and cautions which appear to be effective guiding principles. They can be summarized into the following (Finocchiaro, 1964, ch. V) :

a) "Creating a favourable learning environment". This can be done first of all by creating a "cultural island" in the classroom. A foreign environment can be reproduced both by enforcing the almost constant use of the foreign language and by reflecting various aspects of the foreign culture (by means of objects, displays, charts, maps, flags, etc.). Secondly, spontaneous communication should be enhanced by establishing pleasant relationships.

b) "Planning for learning". No matter how spontaneous the process of teaching young children may be, it is always desirable to plan class-work attentively so that every lesson will relate back to something that has been taught and will lead to the use of an item or skill in a broader, more integrated language activity. Every lesson should occupy a logical place in a well-conceived over-all plan. If it is desirable to maintain an open attitude with regard to new aspects of developing situations, it is also desirable to conceive well-ordered sequences of "units of work": they will contain a centre of interest, fed with one or two dialogues, some structural patterns, some vocabulary items, and several drills, supplemented with interesting activities, like games, songs, dramatizations. Language games, songs, creative play activities, audio-visual aids will serve to vitalize learning.

c) "Correlating language and other curriculum areas". If language is to become a tool for communication, all experiences enjoyed by the children should become stimuli to communication. In particular, with regard to the whole of school life, children should be made to feel that learning a language is not something apart from their programme, but an integral part of it. Accordingly the use of the foreign language will be enriched and stimulated if, for example, the various centres of activity in the room are labelled in the foreign language, simple arithmetic problems are worked out in the foreign language, geography lessons are given in the foreign language, dances of the foreign country are learnt and enjoyed during the physical education period or the recreation period, etc.

These are only a few of the endless means that can build a successful plan for second-language teaching to young children. Rather than strict scientific research in this field a wider and more systematic collection of fruitful experiences would be advisable.

(What has been developed in this section, should be related to the general considerations previously laid down in ch. III, par. 3.2).

4.4.3 Adolescents as L_2 learners.

Language teaching should take into account the special characteristics of adolescent learning.

4.4.3.1 Psychological background.-

i) The role of intelligence.- Both the psychology of 'operationism' (Piaget) and descriptive genetic psychology (Gesell, Burt, Valentine, etc.) agree on one important point: viz. the increasing ability to abstract in early adolescence (11-14 years of age) is still tied to concrete activity. Abstract relations and definitions relative to mathematics and grammar are beyond a good many of the thirteen-year-olds, and some of the fourteen-year-olds, although within the reach of the brighter twelve-year-olds. (Valentine, 1953, p. 295). At this age, therefore, language cannot be taught through abstract definitions and formal rules. Furthermore, intelligence, especially during development periods, should not be considered as an isolated factor: intelligence is inevitably conditioned in its functioning by physiological, emotional, and social factors. Its development is basically of an interactional nature. Later on, throughout adolescence, abstract reasoning may become helpful in getting a deeper understanding of the structure of language.

ii) The role of Special Abilities.- Both general and special abilities are important in language learning (Valentine, 1953, p. 34). However, "special abilities-arithmetical, verbal, manual and so on - seem to mature later than general ability, and so become important after twelve or fourteen" (Valentine, 1953, p. 34). 'Linguistic aptitude' seems to be - as a special ability - something more complex than 'verbal ability'. The former would imply a higher degree of versatility in language learning. What is the state of linguistic aptitude in adolescent age? No research on the point is available. Nevertheless it can be suggested that linguistic aptitude will be strong and effective in adolescence if it will be properly and timely developed during early childhood.

iii) The role of Motivation.- Do adolescents feel a natural interest in the study of languages? It is hard to define whether language interests in adolescents are 'natural'; it would be more appropriate to speak of culturally-induced interests. Interest in second-language learning might be actively present if adolescents have had the enjoyable experience of learning a second language in primary school. Moreover their general verbal and social motivations could be well oriented towards foreign languages. Generally speaking in dealing with adolescents the language teacher should bear in mind the following facts:

a) During adolescence there takes place a quantitative and qualitative enrichment of the individual's personal vocabulary;

b) adolescent language becomes more logical and discursive;

c) the adolescent is particularly sensitive to the typical aesthetic values of language expression;

d) modern adolescents are very sensitive to the values of international understanding and co-operation. Learning a foreign language at this age will probably contribute to the refinement and enlargement of verbal-conceptual material, to a habit of accurate reflection upon one's own means of expression, and to a widening of social international consciousness.

4.4.3.2 Pedagogical indications.

i) The 'What' of language teaching.- Most of what can be said about adult second-language learning can be applied to this age. The language to be taught should be 'general language'; only on more advanced levels of schooling and language competence it will be possible to introduce 'special languages' (literary, technical, scientific). The cultivation of oral skills might present some difficulty if the adolescent has not been trained phonetically at an earlier age. On the other hand, reading and writing will be easier as targets due to the adolescent's greater intellectual and social development. Descriptive or 'living' grammar can be introduced not for its own sake but only as a functional aid to better understanding of language functions and to prevent or remedy typical errors. The teaching of literature is certainly possible, whereas a deeper understanding and appreciation of the foreign culture and civilisation is at this age highly desirable. Acquiring language skills is the initial purpose of language learning; but we must not forget that this immediate aim is subordinate to the final aim of enabling youth to assimilate human values embodied in the forms of expression and in the culture of a foreign language.

ii) The 'how' of effective teaching.- It remains true, also at this age, that the teacher should play the role of a 'stage director': active methods, involving total pupil participation, are useful at this age no less than in childhood, although some procedures and resources may not be conformable to the adolescent's mind and personality. Verbal interaction of a higher nature - dealing with subjects of particular interest to the adolescent - becomes the platform of language work. Accordingly conversation, discussion, role playing may be considered very important procedures. Oral work should remain dominant especially at least at the beginners' level. Reading will become a rich source of stimulations as language acquisition progresses.

Language study can become more autonomous in later adolescence. Programmed textbooks, of little use and generally not applicable to young children, can be of some avail in certain phases of language study. Language laboratories, if well organized, have proven to be useful tools for self-instruction (for example, in the 'library mode') during adolescence.

Grammatical instruction should be informal and practical, at the outset, that is induced from living speech and actual difficulties. It will therefore follow - not precede - contact with the living language (Titone, 1964, pp. 75-97).

4.4.4 Adults as L_2 learners.:

All over the world growing numbers of adults attend language courses for different purposes, frequently of an instrumental of utilitarian nature. A few authors have studied the problem of language teaching to adults both from the social and the cultural points of view (Lowe & Lowe, 1965 ; Titone, 1965 ; Bouton, 1969; Van Passel, 1970; Freddi, 1974; Gembalo & Holec, 1973). The extreme variety of psychological backgrounds, motivations, and learning conditions makes the definition of basic methodological tenets very difficult. Although the emphasis on a 'systematic approach' is fully justified, no single method or procedure seems to be easily generalizable to sufficiently wide populations of adult students. A few general indications will follow.

4.4.4.1 Psychological background.- Bouton (1969, pp. 568 ff) remarks that for an adult learning a new language is tantamount to a revolution in the deep structure of the ego securely couched in the individual's mother tongue. Evading from this confortable nest equals a personal '_bouleversement_'.

The psychological block experienced by the adult language learner stems from strongly built defense mechanisms rather than from physiological resistance.

Such a syndrome presents a number of interesting symptoms such as :

i) a feeling of insecurity and clumsiness that in certain cases produces a real psycho-motor paralysis;

ii) the feeling of the uselessness of any effort which is aggravated by the expectation of great difficulties;

iii) an excessive muscular tension affecting vocal organs;

iv) sudden fatigue deriving from overexpense of physical and mental energies;

v) a frequent feeling of frustration depending on the gap between cognitive richness and limited linguistic competence in L_2;

vi) numerous interferences at all language levels (phonological, grammatical, lexical, etc.) depending on the strength and stability of L_1 which opposes overall resistance to the assimilation of new and strange patterns;

vii) the tendency to autonomous work which makes it hard to accept standardized instruction and teacher directions.

These characteristics are mostly negative. However, it must be remembered that adults show some important assets that enable them to overcome their peculiar liabilities, for example :

i) strong rational (social, cultural, instrumental) motivations;

ii) intellectual experience and possible transfer of learning strategies if they have developed a high degree of competence in their native language and if they have already learnt another second language;

iii) the ability to carry on self-instrumental work.

Keeping all these aspects in mind some pedagogical guidelines can be usefully pointed out.

4.4.4.2 Pedagogical indications.

i) The linguistic 'corpus' must be defined in terms of general and specific objectives set up by the learner for himself; use and functional value must be related to the learner's goals (oral and/or reading comprehension; oral and written expression; basic language or special language).

ii) Oral conditioning must be particularly accurate due to the adult's phonetic resistance both on the receptive and on the productive side. Intensive ear training through use of tape recorder or language audio-activa laboratory is an important step especially at the beginning level. However, a pure 'mim-mem' approach (based on intensive mimicry and memorization) would be counterproductive with adult students: it would defy their dessire for rational understanding and their intellectual motivations.

iii) The tendency with the adult to look for graphic support and to visualize oral language becomes a source of interferences especially on the phonological level. The use of pictures strictly connected with sound sequences can be kept as a remedy against graphic interference in languages with a non-phonetic spelling.

iv) Grammar is considered by the adult as a life-boat to grab on with all might to avoid floundering. But formal grammar would certainly betray such expectations. A functional or practical approach to grammar, consisting in the use of grammatical explanations whenever a special need for clarification arises, is the only acceptable one. In order to avoid the interference of abstract grammatical theory, it is advisable to start as a rule from examples of living language and to trace back inductively the steps to rules and concepts. Grammar learning *is* indeed an inductive process. (Titone, 1965, 1969).

v) Autonomous learning (Cembalo & Holec, 1973), as requested by the adult student, can be effectively aided by the use of programmed instruction. Programmed language courses are available in great quantity, but more research is required in order to find a better model than the present linear or branching types of programming, which do not seem to conform completely to the intrinsic characteristics of the psychology of language learning. (Titone, 1971).

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V. CURRICULUM ORGANIZATION AND INTERDISCIPLINARY INTEGRATION.

Issues on *curriculum* construction and development have taken a central place in today's educational world-wide debate. Deep changes both in social structure and in scientific contents have placed new demands on school curricula. More precise definitions of objectives and contents in the teaching of science and mathematics, but especially of the social subjects like history and languages, are urgently demanded by educators and educational planners. With regard to language education and foreign language instruction, specifically, definition of methods and techniques presupposes clear decisions on curriculum objectives and contents.

5.1 Principles of curriculum organization in second-language teaching.

5.1.1 Models of curriculum organization.

The term 'curriculum', currently used initially in the United States and in Great Britain, is of very ancient origin. It appears at the latest in Georg Daniel Morhof's *Polyhistor* (1688), a pedagogical work in which the chapter on syllabuses is entitled *De curriculo scholastico*. The present revival of this term in contemporary pedagogical glossaries is motivated by the enlargement of the meaning traditionally attached to school syllabuses. Much more than just bodies of notions to be memorized is meant today by curriculum theoreticians and researchers. Educational objectives, cognitive and operational or behavioural contents, with the addition of the specification of learning-teaching methods and procedures, make up a better structural definition of the modern idea of 'curriculum'.

Studies in curriculum planning and evaluation are growing rapidly in number and significance. (Cf. UNESCO, 1968; Huhse, 1968; Thomas, Sands, Brubaker, 1968; and esp. for a critical view Robinsonn, 1975).

With a view to applying curriculum theory to language teaching, three aspects of the problem may be considered: i) The theoretical scope of curriculum research; ii) Some basic criteria for curriculum decision; iii) Directions in language curricula specification.

i) Curriculum research is concerned with the sociological (political, economical) reasons for definite educational objectives, with the functional relevance of syllabus contents with regard to those objectives, with the formulation of syllabuses and methods of instruction for different school levels. No doubt curriculum revision is a crucial problem in all countries at the present time, and educational scientists are far from having found satisfactory operational models and adequate solutions to the numerous problems involved in building new programmes for a new world. As a policy science curriculum research and speculation tend to combine re-thinking over cultural traditions and their interpretations, elements derived from social and behavioural theories, empirical documentation and decisional models, in order to rationalize some basic practical operations. Prevision and planning become scientific operations because both their premisses and their procedures are scientific in method and content.

ii) Every theoretically founded curriculum investigation presupposes a conceptual framework implying categories and correlations susceptible of being ordered into a system. The elements of such a system are (Robinsohn, 1975, P. II, ch. 2):

- The end of education consists in ensuring the single individuals with the ability to control life situations.
- This ability is attained by acquiring certain qualifications and dispositions.
- These qualifications in turn are supplied by the various elements constituting the curriculum.

Accordingly, curriculum planning will be the result of the identification, in a precise and objective manner, of those situations, qualifications, and curriculum constituents. These are the three essential variables of curriculum research.

This model should be applied in defining each specific part of the educational curriculum, namely each discipline as a system of notions and abilities to be learnt by students at different levels.

iii) Language curricula are differently specifies in current practice. Directions in this specific field are of two kinds by and large :

- Formal knowledge of the language.- the entire syllabus is heavily pivoted on grammar; the main purpose is understanding and memorizing grammatical rules and paradigms; translation is the only exercise provided for better understanding of the grammar of the language; the general approach is consequently of a rational and analytic type.
- Functional learning of communicative skills.- the syllabus is equated with the psychological process of acquiring the fundamental language skills (understanding, speaking, reading, writing) in a situational context of real communication; the main purpose is adequate (communicative competence'; practice is widely diversified into a variety of exercises and drills both situation-centred and pattern-shaped; the general approach is functionally oriented and of a both cognitive and operational type.[+]

A more comprehensive perspective of the language curriculum lide the latter, would imply a variety and complexity of constituents to be ordered into a system of related dynamic learning operations. Such a "system approach" to language curriculum planning can be identified in the "integrated model" proposed by E. Zierer (1973) which can ensure a complete grasp of all the essential variables of the language learning teaching process.

[+] These two directions, viewed critically, are both wanting in several respects. The author believes that language learning is a very complex activity taking place at least on three different and hierarchically dependent levels: the *tactical* level (behavioural operations like the physical, physiological, and psychological operations characterizing the speech act), the *strategic* level (cognitive operations like mental programming, selecting, ruling, controlling language acts), and the *ego-dynamic* level (personalized operations stemming from and controlled by the communicator's self, implying motivations, interests and attitudes, linguistic consciousness, self-assertion, intentions and decisions related to language behaviour). This threefold system of language learning operations would constitute the learning objectives to be nourished, so to speak, with specific language contents, and guided and aided by specific teaching procedures. (Cf. Titone 1973, 1977). (Cf. in this chapter, par. 5.2.4).

Such a model, with a few modifications and integrations, will guide the following considerations.

5.1.2 A "system" (or integrated) model for language curricula.

An adequate language curriculum must stem from the systematic inclusion of mutually related factors essential in the process of language learning. The main fault with most of modern syllabuses and methods has consisted in lack of sufficient comprehensiveness in viewing language learning as a totality process. A 'system approach' is both holistic and hierarchical: that is, it tries to comprehend *all* the essential variables in the process and to relate them within a general scheme of interdependent levels of operation. Therefore, a 'system model' postulates the inter-relation of the following characteristics:

i) It must represent methodology as a *cybernetic system*.

ii) It must reflect the *functional relations* existing among its components.

iii) It must represent a *hierarchical organization* of all its components.

iv) It must be *flexible*, that is, it must work in such a manner as to be ever open to the new contributions coming from the various disciplines that constitute the scientific basis of language teaching methodology.

A didactic system (D) can be defined as (Zierer, 1973) :

$$D = (S, T, E), \text{ namely :}$$

S = the *strategy* of teaching
T = the *Tactics* of teaching

E = system *Evaluation*.

Strategy refers to planning, while Tactics refers to the action planned.

5.1.2.1 Teaching strategy.- It can be described in terms of the following pattern :

$$S = \left\{ P, EV, S, O, L, LP, Q, SP, PS, C \right\} \text{ , namely :}$$

P = Psychological structure of the average learner in a hypothesized group. It includes psycho-informational parameters (short- and long-term memory, and cognitive information processing), motivation potential (conditioned by such factors as sex, age, social extraction, experience, maturation, readiness, intelligence, sociability, native language competence), and previous information about the subject-matter.

EV = Education Values, fundamental and practical, dictated by social and personal demands.

S = Subject-matter, the language to be learnt, chosen on the basis of the accepted educational values and of the learner's psychological structure.

O = Objectives of learning, as predictible behavioural changes in terms of operational acquisitions (skills, attitudes, etc.).

L = Linguistic analysis of the teaching materials (General and Applied Linguistics).

LP = Learning Principles derived from educational and informational psychology.

Q = Quantification of subject-matter with respect to the objectives, learning psychology and the learner's psychological structure.

SP = Subject-matter Presentation, governed by general methodological principles, learning psychology, and educational technology.

PS = Psycho-social aspects, related to group learning and connected with the principles of general system theory: the teaching situation takes place in the form of interaction between the teaching system (teacher or teaching aids) and the learning systems (pupils).

C = Control of achievement according to evaluation theory and techniques.

It must be noted that each variable is a group of factors of remarkable complexity.

5.1.2.2 Teaching tactics.- The following pattern describes language teaching tactics :

T = (S, LS, TS, E), namely:

S = Teaching Strategy.

LS = Learning systems as a whole, i.e. the pupil as complex learning system.

TS = Teaching system, i.e. the teacher and/or the media employed by him.

E = Effector, or the operational device that applies teaching strategy to the learning systems according to a matching procedure: strategy therefore interacts with each learner (LS) in order to produce the best of learning effects.

Tactics is highly influenced by professional and personal qualities of the single teacher, the former consisting of pedagogical abilities and linguistic competence, the latter manifested in teaching style characteristics.

On one side teaching strategy is a mere structured plan and not a system as lacking a dynamic element; on the other side the actual interaction between learning systems and teaching systems ruled by strategy functions as a system (tactics) determining thereby a corresponding teaching situation (Zierer, 1973, p. 7).

5.1.2.3 System evaluation.- Interaction between teaching systems and learning systems is subjected to constant control or evaluation in order to check the effects in the teaching situation and the results in the learner's acquisition. Systematic testing and interpretation of results functions in turn as a feedback system: thus the didactic system functions cybernetically and its efficiency is increased.

The present writer's suggestion is that Zierer's "integrated model" does not apply merely to a definition of method but it encompasses the whole of the language curriculum, and consequently it can be considered as the most exhaustive theory of curriculum organization. In the following paragraphs only a few of the basic components will be examined since others have already received due recognition in the preceding parts of this book.

5.2 Some important 'system components' of the language curriculum.

Together with a brief mention of one new aspect of the psychological structure of the language learner (P), the following components will be dwelt on: subject-matter quantification (Q), subject-matter presentation (SP), as following the prior component: decision about subject-matter (S).

5.2.1 Subject-matter.

It entails decisions as to : i) selection of the language, ii) selection of linguistic material.

i) Choice of language.

Generally speaking, from an educational point of view, any language is worth studying inasmuch as any lanlanguage contains human values capable of stimulating personality development. From a practical point of view, and more precisely, considering social and historical conditions, this choice may be determined by a variety of reasons. Following are the three reasons considered to be sufficiently relevant:

a) Practical (or instrumental, or utilitarian) purposes.- a language is chosen because of its utility for academic, scientific, or vocational purposes.

b) Pedagogical purposes.- the choice is based on the easiness (economy) of the study of it or on the facilities available for it within the limits of the general curriculum.

c) Political reasons.- these may revolve around the necessity of national or international understanding and contact.

For example, all of these reasons are at the basis of the choice of English in many countries as an international language.

The decision in favour of one second language will depend on an as wide as possible consultation among the academic, cultural, scientific, educational, political, economic bodies of the country in order to identify the real linguistic needs of the student population.

ii) Selection of the linguistic material.

Here reference is made to the adequate selection of the contents of learning. These contents can be classified as:

a) Phonological material, including a phoneme inventory, information about phoneme distribution, and about the system of allophones, in relation to the phonological system of the learner's language (contrastive phonology)
b) Lexical material, embracing content words (selected according to familiarity, frequency, availability, easiness) and structural words (according to frequency and structuring power). Basic dictionaries tend to answer these criteria although their static character makes them quickly perishable.
c) Grammatical material, including grammatical patterns chosen according to their consistence with the language variety and level, their productivity value (in generating needed sentences), and their difficulty (with regard to the age and communicative level of the speaker child, or adolescent, or adult).
d) Idioms: corresponding to the language variety or level and to the register used in actual communication.

All through this careful work of analysis and selection the contribution of modern descriptive linguistics has become a powerful aid. Language description is a differentiated task in that it differs according to level, content, expression, and type of material, and furthermore it contains an analysis of the various language subsystems: sounds, structures, vocabulary, and meaning. (Mackey, 1965, ch. 2). Descriptive linguistics is an important basis for teaching analysis. This explains the unique impact exerted upon language pedagogy by modern linguistics. (Heddesheimer & Holec, 1972; Roulet, 1976).

5.2.2 Quantification of subject-matter.

A very interesting model of quantification analysis has been described by Zierer (1973, pp. 71-89). A few suggestions can be borrowed from it. Following are the main steps in this process of analysis :

i) Formal description of learning contents.

A learning content is equal to "one minimum didactic informational unit" (Zierer, 1973, p. 71) which can be completed by means of one teaching exercise. Each learning content is a structure of the following type :

$$LU = (Q \{ R \}), \text{ namely :}$$

LU = Learning Unit (content);

Q = new didactic informational Quantum;

R = Repertoire of supporting concepts.

In other words, previous repertoires (R_1, R_2, ... R_n) or pre-existing acquisitions are required for all subsequent acquisitions.

An example :

a) Learning objective : "The student shall be able to use, in a given situation, the auxiliary do with an interrogative positive sentence in English."

b) The learning contents are three:
   1. The ability to use the form does with interrogative positive sentences
   2. The ability to use the form do with i.p.s.
   3. The ability to use the form did with i.p.s.

c) Repertoires (R) :
   - for learning content 1 :
     R_1 : to be able to construct an English sentence according to the subject-Verb-Complement (Object) pattern
     R_2 : to know that the English finite verb, Present Tense, varies in the 3rd Person Singular only and that this form is /s/
     R_3 : the principal verb loses its ending
     R_4 : the auxiliary do is introduced which receives this ending : does.

R_5 : the auxiliary *does* precedes the Subject.

- for learning content 2:
  R_6 : learning content 1
  R_7 : The form of the Present Tense *do* is invariable in all Persons.
- learning content 3:
  R_8 : learning content 2
  R_9 : the form of the auxiliary *do* for the Past Tense is *did* for all Persons.

It should be noted that this scheme does not refer to the actual teaching or presentation procedure but only to the *planning* of definite language teaching units all along a course (textbook or syllabus).

ii) Degree of complexity of learning contents.

Complexity of units depends both on quantitative and qualitative criteria.

a) Quantitative aspect : The repertoire of linguistic forms (morphemes) and the repertoire of psycholinguistic operations (discrimination, memorization) can be quantified by using 'information bits'. (See Zierer, 1970). For example, learning the English definite article *the* (1) would imply the assimilation of :

$$I = 1 \log_2 1 = 0 \text{ bit;}$$

whereas learning the Spanish articles *el*, *la*, *los*, *las*, would imply:

$$I = 4 \log_2 4 = 4 \ \mathrm{ld}\ 4 = 8 \text{ bits of information.}$$

On the other hand, the quantification of the amount of memorization needed for the assimilation of a given language form could be reckoned on the basis of the psycho-informational parameters of memory (Zierer, 1970, pp. 41 ff.).

b) Qualitative aspect : Complexity depends here on the hierarchical rank of cognitive operations required for a definite learning content. In this relation a taxonomy of cognitive levels as the one elaborated by Bloom could be of some use. (Bloom, 1964).

A particular application of the quantification criteria to language materials is represented by the distribution of vocabulary contents. In this case the following criteria ought to be kept in mind:

1) Vocabulary extension : It comprises the number of words to be assimilated by the learner in order to achieve a definite learning task. The number depends:
- on the specific language (it seems that an ordinary conversation in German would require more words than in English;
- on the semantic content of the messages (less words will be needed in a conversation on familiar topics than in a scientific or literary discussion).

2) Active and passive vocabulary : Recognition of words is usually larger than the amount of words ready for active use.

3) Minimum vocabularies : Leising (1966) considers an amount of 4,000 to 5,000 words (chosen according to frequency) as equivalent to 95 % of all the words used in current texts. More exactly, although with some obscurity as regards the meaning of "basic communication", "reading", "spoken language", Lado (1965) considers the following minimum vocabularies :
- an active vocabulary of about 2,000 words as a minimum adequate for "basic communication";
- a passive vocabulary of about 7,000 words as adequate for "reading";
- a vocabulary of 3,000-4,000 words an adequate quantity for understanding spoken English or for writing in English.
However, such parameters are in serious need of empirical testing.

4) Quantitative composition of the vocabulary : Some useful criteria are as follows :
- the global density of vocabulary increase per unit, that is the proportionate amount of new words with respect to the total of words used in that unit;
- other parameters like the semantic field embracing

the proposed words, the amount of cognates, the frequency of a word according to the type of content of a message, the rate of vocabulary with respect to the grammatical categories required for learning in a given teaching unit, etc. A special formula has been worked out by Zierer (1973), p. 85) to calculate the proportional increase of new words per lesson, once the total vocabulary amount has been fixed for the total course. However, such an apriori measure would not allow for the necessary flexibility in planning and carrying out teaching work in varying situations.

5.2.3 Presentation of subject-matter.

The term 'presentation' is an oversimplification of the actual problem of situational teaching tactics. Leading (pedagogical guidance) the learner to the proposed ends as essential constituents of communicative competence involves a very particular organization and distribution of the language materials and the presentation of them in such a manner as to ensure maximum assimilation in conformity to the psychological structure of the individual learner. According to Mackey (1965) such operations are basically: selection, gradation, presentation, and repetition.

5.2.3.1 Selection .- Since no method can teach the whole language and knowing the whole language is both unnecessary and impossible, the quantity and quality of the language elements must be carefully selected. Many old methods include more of the language than the average native speaker posesses, an excessive amount of material that is never used and soon forgotten. This problem concerns directly the amount and type of vocabulary. Traditional foreign-language methods teach 500 to 1,500 words a year over a period of six years. Of these a maximum of only one-third is remembered, according to the Vocabulary Committee of the Sixth Conference of the International Federation of Modern Language Teachers. This is because there is no relationship between the wide selection made the limited purposes of the learner, and the level and duration of a course.

Selection, therefore, of vocabulary and grammar must be based on :

i) the purpose, viz, the aims and functions of language use, the learner's intentions (study, travel, business), the types of learners (children, adults; students, tourists, etc.);

ii) the level, that is, a beginner's course, for example, will need more common essentials than an advanced course;

iii) the duration of the course: selection will be more rigorous for a short-period emergency course than for an extensive course.

These criteria will affect:

iv) the type of language (dialect, register, style, media); and

v) the amount of language material, as needed for sufficient mastery relative to purposes, level, and duration (For a discussion of the basic factors influencing language amount see Mackey, 1965, pp. 164-201).

5.2.3.2 Gradation .- After the question: what should be taught? follows the question: in what order should it be taught? Ordering or sequencing matters a great deal from the point of view of effective learning. "If a language is a system and not a list of words or a collection of clichés, it matters a great deal. It means that we cannot start anywhere or with anything; for in a system one thing fits into another, one thing goes with another, and one thing depends upon another". (Mackey, 1965, p. 204).a

The grouping of items in the system (What goes with what?) and in particular structures (What fits into what?) and the sequence of items in the system (Which items follow which?) and in structures (Which structures follow which?) are important phases in distributing the language material for effective assimilation. They depend on a number of criteria (see Mackey, 1965, pp. 203-225) which are either of a linguistic nature (the way the language is organized as a system) or of a psychological relevance (the best way of learning sets of items). One important trend of opinion today consists in considering the psychological or functional criteria primary in determining what items are necessary or useful for communication in given situations (situation-oriented syllabus); whereas the linguistic or structural criteria would follow as determiners of the order in which sequences of utterances should be constructed. For example, determining the function of the utterance: John is coming here alone depends on the situation chosen as a communication framework, no less than on the psychological interests, level of the learner and of the course, and on his learning repertoires; whereas determining the line of expansion (or variation) of the kernel sentence: He is coming depends on the actualization of linguistic rules in the following order:

He is coming.
He is coming here.
He is coming here alone.
He is coming here alone now.

It is evident that gradation works on the basis of the convergence of multiple criteria which are not exclusively linguistic - contrary to an earlier position held by applied linguists - but both linguistic (structural) and extra-linguistic (psychosociological).

More particularly, from a psycho-pedagogical point of view, the problem refers to syllabus distribution along ascending levels of learning complexity. The following model (based on suggestions laid down by Brooks,(1960, pp. 122-35) could be worth considering :

LEVEL I.

Skills. Time should be given to each of the four language skills in approximately the following proportions :

Listening	50 per cent
Speaking	30 per cent
Reading	15 per cent
Writing	5 per cent

Structure. Structure is learnt in the form of easy dialogues. At this level intensive automatization of patterns is more important than extensive learning of grammatical rules. Prose, dealing with cultural and literary aspects, of a very elementary character, can be read, after first being presented orally. The 'functional grammar approach', in this connection, means simply that if the learner can recognize and employ correctly the essential forms that are appropriate, nothing further is asked.

Brooks summarizes the learnings that can reasonably be expected in Level I as follos :

> "All the phonology of the new language.
> All or nearly all the syntax patterns used in talk.
> A considerable number of the most frequent classes and forms in the morphology.
> A modest amount of vocabulary, especially of 'little' words and of words useful in the situations the learner is most likely to encounter, i.e. those that have formed a large part of the work in the units he has studied". (Brooks, 1960, p. 125).

LEVEL II.

After a quick review of Level I, the programme could take in the following elements.

Skills. A change in emphasis on the proportional distribution of time given to each skill would result in the following scheme:

Listening	30 per cent
Speaking	20 per cent
Reading	40 per cent
Writing	10 per cent

During the first half of this level, reading should continue to be presented first to the ear as a gradual preparation for later silent reading done by the student on his own. Listening and speaking continue to play an important part.

Structure. The spoken language must be the constant criterion for the selection of the structures to be learned in addition to those acquired in Level I. Vocabulary extension will derive from extended reading.

In the dialogues and in the reading passages, important and significant cultural items, both linguistic and non-linguistic, should receive due attention.

> "At the end of Level II we may expect the student to do all that he did at the end of Level I, now with greater confidence and control". (Brooks, 1960, p. 129).

LEVEL III.

Skills. Recommended amount of time:

Listening	20 per cent
Speaking	20 per cent
Reading	40 per cent
Writing	20 per cent

Reading may now be done as homework and a large portion of class time may be spent in discussing the content and drilling the structures and vocabulary of the reading assigned.

Writing practice should develop on a guided basis: summaries 'directed' compositions, rewriting of texts and alike.

Structure. Reading passages should provide contact with more refined and complex grammatical structures so as to reach a comprehensive presentation of the standard patterns of the linguistic structure of the new language. However, readings should not be chosen primarily as examples of structural patterns but rather for their intrinsic value. Various forms of literature may be introduced, including novels and plays of moderate length, and short stories.

Level III is an open-ended level: reading expansion will provide for wider contact with more cultural and literary facts and eventually end into specialized language. Translation, as a special skill, may be introduced from now on. Indeed, true translation work presupposes adequate command of grammar, lexicon, and style. In the previous phases translation can be used by the teacher only as a vehicle to semantic understanding.

5.2.3.3 Presentation.- It means conveying the language material to the student and guiding him to active assimilation. It implies both formal and operational aspects. The 'formal' aspects concern the structure of the textbook and its recorded or pictorial equivalents. They correspond to the questions: What does the learner see when he opens his textbook? How much of the language does it teach him? How are the forms and meanings of the language taught? Does the quantity and quality of the teaching vary from one part of the text to the other? The 'operational' aspects concern the strategy and above all the tactics employed by the teacher in developing a unit or a lesson.

Operational presentation is defined in terms of teaching methods and the use of technological aids dependent on the subject-matter and the psychological structure of the learner. Methods and techniques (see ch. VI and VII) are incorporated into a dynamic system which consists of an ordered sequence of teaching procedures. Such system may correspond to an entire learning unit or to a single lesson. A unit represents a complete, albeit minimum, cycle of learning, and it may be carried on for periods of varying length (one or more weeks): it includes a series of lessons, or micro-cycles. From a 'system' point of view it is more useful to consider units than separate lessons. To this effect various models describing the sequencing of essential steps in a unit have been devised. Dropping any consideration of such traditional models as the "grammar-translation" model, or the "reading-discussion-practice" model and alike, the author wishes to describe an integrated approach to unit construction which has been called the "modular model" of language teaching (or "Glossomathetic Model": Titone, 1973, 1977).

The "Glossomathetic Model" of language teaching. This model given its tactical and cyclical character, provides for both presentation and repetition in language teaching. The process of language assimilation can be described as a series of phases or learning units, each constituted by a set of well-defined activities aiming at the fixation of specific verbal habits or rules. Since such units necessarily include rather large portions of content and usually extend over sufficiently long periods of time, they can be named "macromathemes" (a "matheme" is a minimum learning unit).

There is no apriori criterion for defining the boundaries of the basic "macromathemes" within a language learning programme: their number and extension depend on the type of subject-matter, on the level of instruction, on the student's pace, etc. For instance, learning the entire system of vowel phonemes of the French or English languages may constitute a significant "macromatheme", especially if such phonemes are to be learnt not in isolation but within real language structures.

On the contrary, it is possible to define the essential steps constituting each single "macromatheme". These steps are suggested by an integrated psychology of learning, and they may be named "micromathemes". They are defined by specific significant activities of learning, and can by and large be reduced to three: *cognition* - *practice* - *control*. Comprehending the nature of a task is the initial (inchoative) step of any type of learning; reinforcing the execution of the task by systematic practice is a step leading to 'subconscious' assimilation; while proper feed-back or control of each operation leads to conscious assimilation of skills and to final competence. It must be noted that *motivation* is not absent from this scheme; on the contrary motivational factors play a constant, though sometime latent, role throughout the whole process: cognitive operations, exercises and drills, proprioceptive controls are all influenced by needs, drives, interests, affective states, attitudes, in short by personality dynamics.

i) The structure of a "macromatheme".

Perception and conceptualization of discourse units (inclusive of phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicon, etc) are parts of the INCHOATION MICROMATHEME. This consists of mainly three microphases, viz. :

a) GLOBAL PERCEPTION of a relatively large portion of language discourse which might be presented in the forms of a DIALOGUE, a NARRATIVE, or a DESCRIPTION. The choice of either one of these forms depends on the type of language to be learnt and/or the level of instruction of the students concerned. A Dialogue implies a more immediate and lively sort of interaction. A Narrative describes people and actions (time dimension). A simple Description portrays still or static objects (space dimension).

b) OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS aiming at the active understanding of specific segments of the proposed language unit by means of systematic exploitation of particular lexical and grammatical structures (comprehension exercises).

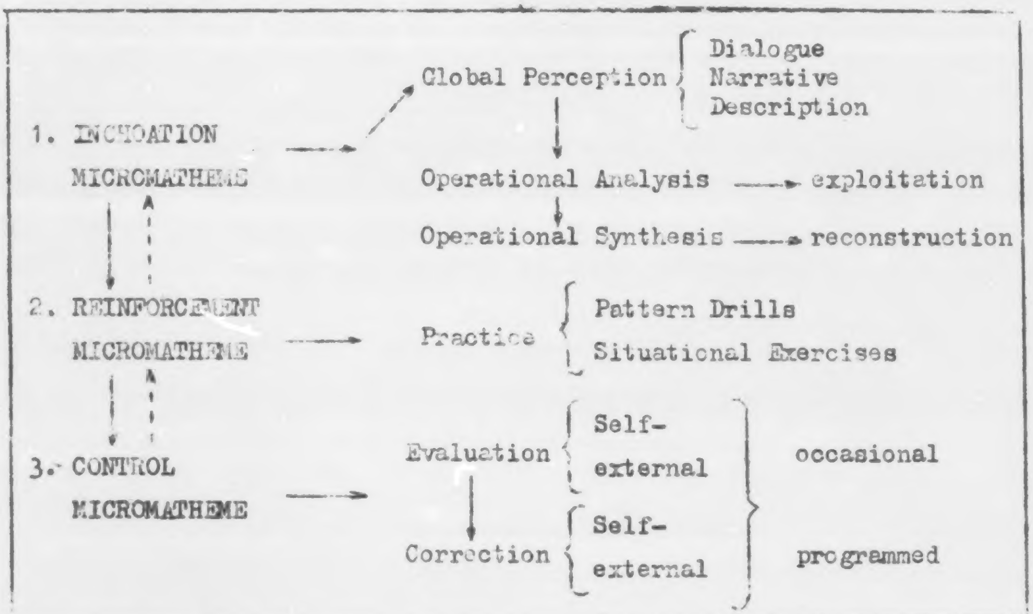
c) OPERATIONAL SYNTHESIS intended to the reconstruction of a complete discourse unit based on the initial sample (Dialogue/Narrative/Description).

The first phase represents some kind of surface learning let us say, metaphorically, like a first coat of paint. The next phase, therefore, must aim at strengthening initial learning so as to produce real deep assimilation. The second then is the REINFORCEMENT MICROMATHEME, where the term 'reinforcement' is taken in its largest sense to indicate stable operational organization brought about by increased motivation and repeated use. PRACTICE is therefore the keyword in this context. Evidently practice does not mean mere repetition of the same items but intensive and extensive manipulation of language wholes as well as of single items in meaningful contexts and true-to-life situations.

PATTERN DRILLS are one elementary form of segmented practice, and they aim essentially at refinishing the mechanical elements of language skills. But, over and above pattern practice, language learning requires the immersion of the learner in meaningful situations of verbal communication (contextualization) through such attempts at spontaneous verbalization as are the commonly called SITUATIONAL EXERCISES (dramatization, guided and free conversation, group discussion, expansion of dialogues, etc.).

Throughout both the INCHOATION and the REINFORCEMENT phases control or linguistic feed-back is constantly exercised by the teacher and the student inasmuch as human learning is self-regulatory by nature. But a maximum of consciousness is and must be attained at a certain point in the process by providing for explicit and systematic CONTROL: the CONTROL MICROMATHEME. Conscious control can be exercised first through EVALUATION (whether externally produced by the teacher or by some teaching device or, in later stages, by the student himself) and CORRECTION. Both Evaluation and Correction can be occasional, as certain needs arise, or programmed (inserted in definite steps of the instructional process and material).

The whole series of phases and steps can be outlined as follows as a basis for a general "teaching algorithm" :


1. INCHOATION MICROMATHEME
Global Perception
Dialogue
Narrative
Description
Operational Analysis
exploitation
Operational Synthesis
reconstruction
2. REINFORCEMENT MICROMATHEME
Practice
Pattern Drills
Situational Exercises
3.- CONTROL MICROMATHEME
Evaluation
Self-
external
Correction
Self-
external
occasional
programmed

The sequential order of the three "micromathemes" is not so invariable as it might appear. Although from a formal point of view - that is from the viewpoint of abstract consideration of process sequentiality - the development of learning would proceed from inchoation through reinforcement to control, in actual fact the order may change due to various instructional conditions. This remark points to the 'modular' character of the Glossomathetic Model.

ii) The concept of "modular teaching".

"Modular teaching" is any instructional process characterized by cyclical reversibility and spiral development.

a) Teaching is modular when it is characterized by reversibility and interchangeability of instructional phases. This means that the position of each micromatheme can be changed or reversed starting from the 3rd or the 2nd according to particular needs. (If, in other words, the initial language portion is already mastered, the teacher may either pass to Control or to Reinforcement. Furthermore, it may be useful or necessary to go back and forth along the three basic phases in order to clarify, re-organize, strengthen, and expand the essential constituents of language competence).

b) Teaching is modular if instructional roles are reversible. The teacher offers initiating stimuli to the learner's responsiveness; but he becomes in turn a respondent by taking up contingently the role of the learner, and so forth. Both the teacher and the student are alternately stimulators and reactors.

c) Teaching is modular if each micromatheme is co-present while each of the others is being developed; obviously, there is difference in emphasis. Development of each phase takes place in a spiral manner and is virtually endless ('open-ended learning tasks').

d) The cyclical nature of modular teaching is an overall characteristic of this process inasmuch as phases and roles are not linearly juxtaposed one onto the other but unfold one out of the other after some sort of logical generation. Each micromatheme is more like a germinal molecule urging toward greater development ('cyclical/spiral process'), not like a fenced-up monad or a completely self-contained unit. Learning is therefore a developmental process working through differentiation and integration; it is in a profound sense a biological continuum; it is not an accumulation of disjointed building blocks.

The integrative character and the flexibility of the modular model seem to guarantee for maximum effectiveness and can usefully implement both elementary programmes of foreign language teaching and advanced instruction.

5.2.3.4 A functional approach to the elementary stage.- The "Threshold Level" (van Ek, 1976). An interesting curriculum project relative to initial language teaching has been developed by a committee appointed by the Council of Europe. The "Threshold Level", as it was called, would aim at presenting an organized syllabus such as :

i) to enable the great majority of pupils to reach it;
ii) to correspond to a minimum level of proficiency;
iii) to make possible communication, especially oral communication, with children or adults in the language studied;
iv) to be based on the exploitation of everyday real-life situations;
v) to include a methodological initiation which would, on the one hand, facilitate continued study of the language and, on the other hand, make it possible to acquire a sufficient understanding of the learning-processes used so that these may be profitably applied to the study of other languages. (van Ek, 1976, p. 3).

The relevance of such a project for coordinate language planning is quite evident.

Its methodological importance stems from its insistence on behavioural objectives in language learning, as stated by van Ek (1976, p. 5) :

> "The basic characteristic of the model used in our definition is that it tries to specify foreign language ability as skill rather than knowledge. It analyses what the learner will have to be able to do in the foreign language and

> determines only in the second place what language-forms (words, structures, etc.) the learner will have to be able to handle in order to do all that has been specified. In accordance with the nature of verbal communication as a form of behaviour the objectives defined by means of this model are therefore basically behavioural objectives".

Syllabus contents are consequently derived from an analysis of verbal behaviour into two component : the performance of language-functions and the expression of, or reference to, notions.

> "What people do by means of language can be described as verbally performing certain functions. By means of language people assert, question, command, expostulate, persuade, apologize, etc. etc. In performing such functions people express, refer to or – to use a more general term – "handle" certain notions. They will, for instance, apologize for being late, for being late for a party, for being late for a party yesterday, etc. etc. Other notions are less directly correlated with lexical items, e.g. the notion of "possession", which may be expressed by means of a verb (have, possess, etc.), but also by means of a prepositional construction (of + nominal group), a genitive case or a possessive pronoun.
>
> Our task, then, in defining a language-learning objective, is to determine what language-functions the learners will have to be able to perform and what notions they will have to be able to handle". (van Ek, 1976, p.6).

The application of the model in the construction of an objective involves making a number of successive choices with regard to :

- target-group (e.g. the great majority of pupils in compulsory education)
- language-activities (e.g. especially oral communication)
- settings (a variety of situations)
- roles (social, like stranger/stranger and friend/friend; psychological, like neutrality, equality, sympathy, antipathy)
- topics (chosen according to adults' interests and school-pupils' interests)
- language-functions (specified on the basis of an analysis of verbal communication)
- general notions (common to all sorts of communication and situations) and specific notions (derived from topic-specifications)

- exponents (i.e. the language-forms, specific for each language, which are commonly used for each function and for each notion).

A syllabus conceived in this way is a long step beyond traditional formal or abstract study of languages, which used to be based on theoretical grammar and on translation of difficult or rare texts; it is also a great stride toward a functional approach envisaging instrumental learning of communication skills (communicative competence) as the primary goal of language study, especially at the fundamental level. Moreover, this model does not privilege any particular method or technique of language teaching: rather, it directs the curriculum-maker and the teacher towards finding the best means to the best end.

The "Threshold Level" project deserves earnest attention and careful application, although its application to special target-groups (e.g. young children, as is being done in Italian primary schools for the experimental teaching of English and French: Titone, 1977) should be weighed most carefully from the psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic points of view.

5.2.3.5 The language curriculum and interdisciplinary integration.- It is a firmly defensible tenet that language learning to achieve a desirable degree of proficiency needs sufficient time. The consequences of this postulate are mainly two: the need for prolongation of the total learning career (starting foreign language learning at an early age and continuing for a greater number of years) and the need for integration of the foreign or secondlanguage with the total syllabus. Indeed, language educators, especially in primary schools, advocate with growing insistence that the second language must not remain an isolated object of study but must become - gradually - a vehicle of general education.

In this way the second language receives a unique reinforcement from its being used both as a tool for spontaneous communication and as a vehicle or medium of acquisition of general knowledge. Consequently the second language will gain a wider space in school activities and will lose its demotivating position due to formal segregation from the other school-subjects and to unnatural compartmentalization.

The principle of interdisciplinary integration will entail core-areas inclusive of notions and activities belonging to different disciplines: not only arts and crafts, physical education and music, and alike, but even more pertinently history, geography, science, mathematics, comparative literature, etc. will provide a rich content to be expressed in the foreign language. In fact the whole of the core-curriculum can be re-presented in the foreign language in alternate time-tables. Projects of this kind have been launched not only in international or bilingual schools (Mackey, 1972) but in bilingual education programmes in Canada and the United States (Saville & Troike, 1971; Swain, 1972).

5.2.4 The psycho-structure of the language learner.

As mentioned above (par. 5.2), the most important system component governing all the operations on subject-matter and especially the modalities of presentation is the psychological structure of the language learner.

Various attempts have been made to the purpose of clarifying the basic aspects of the language learning process. Several theories have been proposed to this effect, of an eclectic or empiricistic or cognitive nature (Titone, 1964, 1971). They appear most evidently as one-sided views of the learning process: they either emphasize operant conditioning (Skinner, 1957) or cognitive organization (Chomsky, 1959, 1968). The present author has felt deep dissatisfaction with both the theoretical premisses and the pedagogical applications of such theories. The result has been a new model of language behaviour and language learning, called the "Glossodynamic Model" (Titone 1973, 1977). A brief exposé of its essentials will serve to demonstrate its applicability to second language teaching on all levels of proficiency.

The Glossodynamic Model is derived from a theory of personality which is essentially 'humanistic' in character: personality as an "open system" (Allport), as a dynamic and integrated system (Maslow), as a "relational system" interacting with the world (Nuttin). At the same time personality, as an integrated structure of different operational levels, is seen as the pivot of all learning, and more so of communication (language) learning.

Accordingly the starting point of this model is the recognition that language behaviour, far from being a linear series of one-level operations, is basically a stratificational and hierarchical system of dynamic structures. Language behaviour is a very important specification of personality dynamics viewed in concrete contextual organization and as such it cannot be reduced to a mere system of verbal habits (Skinner) or even to a system of purely cognitive processes (Chomsky).

This integrated view of language behaviour and language learning includes the co-existence and co-operation of three distinct levels, namely :

- personality structure and dynamics in a 'contextual' perspective,
- cognitive processes, and
- operant conditionings.

The three following levels seem to have a sufficient explanatory power for our purpose, viz. :

i) The TACTIC LEVEL.- It is the appropriate ordering of each single language unit or act with respect to verbal antecedents and consequents. Ordering is seen here as the actual result of language programming, namely as the finished product or concrete verbal performance. The following can be considered as tactical operations:

a) Decoding and encoding performances, based on the acquisition of sets of specific verbal habits (listening and speaking, reading and writing).

b) Neural cortical and peripheral co-ordination and integration of verbal perception and articulation.

c) Verbal feed-back. Language behaviour as a self-regulatory system is endowed with self-control devices and mechanisms which connect input and output flows uninterruptedly. Feed-back is the very basis of tactical co-ordination, and therefore no language can be learnt without proper feed-back functioning.

ii) The STRATEGIC LEVEL.- The ordered nature of single language performances requires the action of 'ordering' or programming mechanisms which are not directly observable but strictly 'mental' in their nature. The mind of the speaker/hearer is responsible for the meaningfulness and grammaticality of each speech act. Tactics, therefore, presupposes strategy. Strategic operations would include :

a) Rule-making processes: linguistic rules are the result of the impact of cognition upon empirical language data which takes the forms of inductive generalization and categorization. External verbal stimuli are elaborated by thought and transformed into language-governing rules.

b) Selective processes: the verbal act implies selection of distinct molecular elements (semantic units + sentences + phrases + morphemes + phonemes); they are the building blocks of speech constructs.

c) Programming processes: the ordering of molecular elements into molar structures (discourse) requires definite programming mechanisms capable of building larger units of speech. Thus discourse construction, the choice of register and stylistic variants, and more particularly adjustment of each speech act to specific types of situation are typical programming operations, designed to give order, unity, and purpose to verbal encoding in actual instances of communication.

d) Conscious self-regulatory processes (cognitive feed-back): the speaker/hearer becomes conscious of what goes on in the flow of speech and how language works. He is therefore capable of self-criticism and self-correction.

iii) The EGO-DYNAMIC LEVEL.- All psychological and linguistic activities ultimately stem from and flow back to the Self of the communicating person. It is indispensable - for logical reasons - to admit a conscious, directing and unifying agent, the individual speaker's Self operating on a higher level and controlling all subordinate activities (tactics and strategy).

The channels of the Ego's dynamics are manifold. The speaker/hearer's Ego (not in a Freudian sense) works, in communication activity, in the following ways:

a) By reflecting his own existential experience (personal history);

b) By involving or manifesting his world-perception (Weltansicht);

c) By expressing his personal, socio-cultural, linguistic attitudes;

d) By depending on his feelings and emotions (affective components);

e) By following unconscious or subconscious motives;

f) By following his communicative intentions, volitions, and decisions;

g) By ruling his overall linguistic or communicative behaviour in accordance with his linguistic self-awareness: the human speaker/hearer is conscious of his self as a communicating agent; linguistic competence to the highest degree is equal to the ability of total self-perception and self-control of the verbal actor. However, since communicating implies inter-personal contact, linguistic self-awareness is essentially 'dyadic consciousness', that is the perception of one's verbal interactions affecting people and the world.

To sum up the essential features of the 'Glossodynamic Model' the genetic order of language acquisition can be visualized as following these steps:

1 →	2 →	3
EGO	STRATEGY	TACTICS
The will to communicate	The ability to communicate	The act of communication

Acquiring an ego-perspective on communication in a second language (motivation, attitudes favourable to this particular learning task), acquiring strategic and tactic competence (through practice and understanding of language learning tasks) sum up the whole of the process and point out the essential targets of language teaching. In practice the enlightened and skilful teacher of a second language will try :

a) to develop an interest and favourable attitudes with regard to the foreign language and culture (ego-dynamics);

b) to give meaning and significance to each portion of the language material (strategy), at the same time as

c) definite items of linguistic practice (in listening, speaking, reading, and writing) are carried on (tactics).

Communicative competence, therefore, is not merely cognitive possession of linguistic rules but a stable integration of strategies and tactics controlled by the ego, who alone is accountable for each speech act and for each learning activity.

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N.B.- With regard to the choice of a second international language it may be advisable to take into account some of the very critical remarks made by Louis-Jean CALVET in his *Linguistique et colonialisme: petit traité de glottophagie* (Paris: Payot, 1974), apart from his ideological interpretation of linguistic imperialism.

VI. LANGUAGE TEACHING STRATEGIES (Approaches and Methods)

6.1 The renewal of foreign language teaching methods today is based on scientific investigation applied to eradicating old errors, on a psychological approach linked with linguistic research and theory, on the aid of new electronic devices.

The reform movement, previously limited to few countries and to few selected circles in each country, has spread all over the western and eastern world. One sign of this universality is the rapid emerging of national and international organizations and the frequency of conference meetings on an international scale dealing with the problems of modern language teaching. The movement has acquired a geographical dimension which almost equals the interest in the physical and mathematical sciences.

But more significant is the fact of a renewed fervour in the search for more effective methods or strategies and a more critical attitude on the part of language teachers. With the acceptance of newer trends in language teaching the older ones have not disappeared, although today it is possible to speak of certain gradually prevailing trends. These, to mention only two outstanding ones, are

1) a tendency toward the integration of multiple features into an eclectic type of methodology, and

2) the growing interest in experimental research applied to language teaching. procedures.

Methods of an informative type, like the grammar-translation method, are gradually superseded by more active ways of teaching languages.

Most of today's methods can be classified as instances of the "functional approach". Their aim is mostly practical: they tend to teach the language as a living tool for communication.

The newest direction, and a more scientific one, is represented by the "integrated approach". Both theory and teaching experience converge to show that the complexity of the teaching process can be met with varying, flexible, adaptable, many-sided procedures only. A comprehensive philosophy and psychology of language learning point to the necessity of postulating a multi-dimensional approach and, accordingly, of keeping methodological programming ever open to new adaptations and contributions from various provinces of theory and research.

The "integrated methodologist" is witnessing several characteristic phenomena in the field of language teaching:
i) an increasing emphasis on experimental research as the ultimate test of pedagogical validity (application of research techniques);
ii) the quest for more adequate psychological explanations of the language learning process (appeal to psycholinguistics);
iii) the crisis and downfall of grammar (rejection of the teaching of formal grammatical notions);
iv) the recapturing of the situational principle as a reaction to a mechanistic idea of pattern practice and to a formalized concept of language, and at the same time by advocating the context of situation as a sign of communicative authenticity (influence of the pragmatics of communication and pragmalinguistics).

As a guide to the complexity of contemporary trends the following tentative classification of methods can be offered. (Titone, 1968, 1970).

A CLASSIFICATION OF EXISTING FL TEACHING METHODS

- 1.0 THE FORMAL APPROACH
  - 1.1 Grammar-translation method
  - 1.2 Formal reading methods
- 2.0 THE FUNCTIONAL APPROACH
  - 2.1 Direct methods
    - 2.1.1 The Berlitz method
    - 2.1.2 The Eclectic Direct method
    - 2.1.3 The Simplification methods
      - 2.1.3.1 Basic English
      - 2.1.3.2 The Graded-Direct method
  - 2.2 Intensive methods
  - 2.3 Intuitive (audio-visual) methods
  - 2.4 Audio-lingual (aural-oral) method
- 3.0 THE INTEGRATED APPROACH
  - 3.1 Functionally eclectic methodology ("Multiple approach")
  - 3.2 Scientific integrated approach.

6.2 The Formal Approach.

Such an approach includes those varieties of teaching procedures that at large proceed from the abstract study of grammar rules to their application through translation. Its 'formalism' dependes, therefore, on the accepted practice of abstracting from concrete living language while submitting it to conceptual anatomy. It may also be called an 'informative approach' (I. Morris), because it tends to impart knowledge or information about the language without caring about the practical mastery of the language.

The formal approach finds its application mainly in two varieties of method.

i) The commonly called grammar-translation method is far detached from actual speech being concerned exclusively with the general rules that govern the written language and basing all practice merely on the exercise of translation from and into the foreign language.

ii) The reading method deals with the language itself but it grants overly consideration, time, and effort to decoding the written language on the basis of grammar and analytic translation. It is formal if it leads to the discovery of grammar instead of leading to practical mastery.

There is abundant evidence accumulated through over a century (Titone, 1968) that the formal methods cannot produce complete language mastery. Particularly, they overlook selection and gradation of language material, and they ignore any type of practice which is not reducible to translation. A strictly theoretical grammar method could be accepted only on a very advanced level of linguistic study, with students who have already attained practical mastery of the language and whose purposes may be theoretical competence.

6.3 The Functional Approach.

The role of any functional method is the practical one of leading to the mastery of living language, especially in its oral form. Its typical procedures are functionally bent to the aim of bringing the learner in direct contact with the oral language. The 'functional' character, therefore, lies in that these methods are aimed directly at handling the language and mastering it practically in meaningful communication situations. The classification suggested here is based on the specific emphasis placed by each method on certain particular features of the language learning process.

6.3.1 The Direct Methods.

The qualification of 'directness' refers to the fact that all these methods are based on immediate contact with the foreign language without using the learner's own language and without the intermediary of theory. Following is a representative list of direct methods.

6.3.1.1 The Berlitz Method.- The B.M. is certainly one of the earliest and most publicized examples of the Direct Method. Maximilan Berlitz (born in Poland in 1852) founded his first school in New York City with an essentially practical purpose, namely teaching the basic tools for oral communication. This explains the exclusive stress on the oral form of the language. The teachers are native speakers of the language. Instruction is either individual or directed to small classes.

Following are the main principles of the B.M. (Berlitz, 1949, p.3) :

i) Direct association of the foreign speech with the learner's thought: he must learn as soon as possible to "think in the foreign language".

ii) Constant use of the foreign language without ever using the learner's own language.

Listening and repeating are two major procedures.

The classical form of the B.M. places a great burden on the teacher's ability. Particularly, by using conversation as a dominant form of teaching, he can be induced to present too many different forms at once without realizing that they are different and difficult to the ordinary student.

However, it is undoubtedly possible to avoid these pitfalls by a careful selection and gradation of the language material. (Cf. the various updated Berlitz textbooks).

6.3.1.2 The Eclectic Direct Method.- This is usually associated with a group of British teaching experts who worked chiefly on the teaching of English as a foreign language largely in the Orient and lately in Britain. Their names deserve mention. Among the more commonly known are: Harold E. Palmer (Titone, 1968, ch. 6), Michael West (see references), Lawrence Faucett, H.B. Drake, I. Morris, J.O. Gauntlett.

This methodological concept was largely based on the results of practical experience, but it also included more scientific traits like a more accurate analysis of the linguistic material and the consideration of some suggestions from educational psychology. Their work was carried on mainly along three lines: pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. Using Daniel Jones' analysis of English phonetics as a foundation, these teachers worked out explanations, drills on special difficulties for different language groups, pronouncing dictionaries, gramophone records, etc. The utility of Palmer's work on intonation is well known.

Secondly, basing their teaching mostly on reading, careful selection and grading of vocabulary materials according to frequency and usefulness in usage were made. Word counts, limited and functional vocabularies were then prepared for this purpose (West, 1936), and reading books were compiled within these vocabularies. The same principle was followed in building conversation courses.

In the third place, the usefulness of presenting some sort of grammar to the pupils for more effective learning was recognized. Consequently, these teachers were led to do a great deal of work on the analysis of the language from a functional point of view: this they called 'living grammar'.

Success attained by these methodologists was remarkable due especially to well-prepared teachers and good textbooks. However, the application of a not scientifically validated type of linguistics, ignorance of phonemics, grammar analyzed promiscuously both through meaning and form, some occasional exaggeration in teaching on the production level without insisting enough on basic patterns, represent some weaknesses in the method that may have impaired its efficiency.

6.3.1.3 The Simplification Methods (Cochran, 1958).- These methods are based on the limitation and selection of lexical and structural items so as to ensure a rapid and substantial mastery of the essentials of the language. Under this category two forms of language teaching methods can be included.

i) Basic English (Ogden, 1934, 1939, 1943).- The prominent aspect of B.E. is the limitation of the English vocabulary to a body of 850 words. These can be made to express all kinds of meanings by properly combining them. B.E. claims to have three uses:

a) as a possible universal language;

b) as a means of simplifying and clarifying obscure or elaborate English prose or poetry, or as a means of translating from foreign language into English;

c) as a method of teaching English as a foreign language. The third objective seems to have been more commonly referred to.

In teaching vocabulary and grammar the learner's language can be used. Words are to be presented always in structures B.E. has kept only 16 verbs and 2 auxiliaries, the former being: be, come, do, get, give, go, have, keep, let, make, put, take, say, see, send, seem; and the latter: will, may (plus the auxiliary use of be, have, do). The method makes use of a wide range of reading material for further practice.

The method has undoubtful merits: selection of material, grading of structures according to concrete living language, good reading material. On the other hand, the persistence of drawbacks cannot be denied. For one thing, the selection criterion is not pedagogical, but merely semantic. The vocabulary is seemingly simplified, but in reality it inevitably contains many more than 850 semantic items: the verb to get, for example, presents an enormous variety of meanings. Moreover, although structures are simple, they sound awkward and are far from frequent in true English usage. Languages are redundant and complicated: over-reduction will tend then to make them sound artificial and useless.

ii) The Graded-Direct Method (Richards, 1943; Richards and Gibson, 1952, 1943; Richards, 1952). This is a form of direct method insofar as it aims at placing the student in direct contact with the foreign language without the intermediary of the native tongue. It avoids, however, the wasteful spontaneity of the earlier direct methods in that it offers graded material. Grading here is based on the hierarchical arrangement of vocabulary and structures that is intrinsic to the language itself. In other words, a selected vocabulary is "organized into graded sentence sequences, each building outward from the preceding ones - establishing in the students minds the basic structure of the language, and substituting the active mastery of meaning for mere rote memory" (Richards, 1952, p. 1).

A very important concept in the mind of the author (Richards) is what he calls the 'SEN-SIT', or "a unit made up of a sentence in the situation which gives it meaning... Teaching a language effectively consists of inventing, arranging, presenting, and testing SEN-SITS... When the structure of the sentence corresponds to a structure easily perceived in the situation, the SEN-SIT is said to be clear" (Richards, 1947, p. 1). Grading is therefore the distribution of SEN-SITS from the most obvious to the more ambiguous ones with regard to meaning. Intelligibility is the principal grading criterion. Once the SEN-SITS have been arranged in the ideal order of intelligibility, they are presented without recourse to the learner's own language and by making use of ingenious pictures and of original audio-visual aids.

Grammar is taught by reducing all the material to a few basic structures, introducing each structure in its right place in the ideal meaningful order, and by substitution exercises. Oral work is fairly well cared for.

Apart from the too rigorous adherence to the principle of monolingual instruction and to a simplified (basic) vocabulary that generates awkward constructions, the method is not devoid of merit. The use of concrete illustrative aids, the grading designed to do away with a great many learning difficulties, the clear and realistic teaching of grammar, the good teaching material tested through many years of experience, give worth to the method.

6.3.2 Intensive methods. (Moulton, 1963; Angiolillo, 1947).

Beside many commercialized materials and courses advertized in several countries, a more scientific orientation of the Intensive Method was developed especially in the United States under the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP). Usually the teaching was carried on by a 'duo' composed of the linguist, who gave explanations on the structure of the language, and the instructor, assigned to the drilling sessions. Basic sentences to be drilled and overlearnt are presented in six steps: Imitation, Repetition, Translation, Rotation, Discontinuous repetition, Dialogue practice. The exercises commonly applied are of the following types: illustrative (to establish a grammatical point), substitution, response, translation, variation, and replacement exercises. The well-known modalities of pattern practice are the chief characteristic of the method.

Any intensive method requires a high degree of linguistic aptitude in the learner, a reduction of the language to basic forms, and sufficient time for practice. Intensiveness needs more time, but it is rather a "more-time-in-less-time-accumulation-work". Intensive procedures are to be considered as part of any good method of language teaching. However, one caution needs voicing: such procedures should not produce physical and psychological stress and lead the student to frustration (Rocklyn & Montague, 1965).

6.3.3 Intuitive (audio-visual) methods. (cf. esp. Council of Europe, 1964).

The use of visual aids in language teaching dates as far back as Comenius (17th century) and it regained vigour at the end of the last century. But never like after the last war did technological aids have so deep an impact on language teaching. Wall charts have been surpassed, although not entirely replaced, by slides, motion pictures, film strips, TV programmes, with the added reinforcement of sound-producing machines like phonographs and tape recorders. Audio-visual aids have found a relevant place in foreign language teaching and have found in the language laboratory their most modern prototype.

What ought to be said, however, is that audio-visual techniques cannot alone constitute a 'method' but just a subsidiary part of any method which aims at teaching the spoken language. Secondly, there might be a danger by relying solely on the machine that the learner may take on a rather passive attitude (listening, watching, and nothing more) thus jeopardizing the integrity of the expected outcome in language learning, namely, the ability to actively communicate (and not only to receive messages) in the foreign language.

Furthermore, in teaching children it is more important to use activity procedures (playing, dramatization) - more congruent to their psychological interests - than mere visual, albeit attractive, stimuli.

6.3.4 The Audio-lingual (aural-oral) method.

Insofar as only the audio-oral aspect of language learning is emphasized, this so-called method is reduced to a set of procedures or techniques aiding the auditory assimilation and the building of productive skills in the foreign language. Language is sound, but it is not only sound. It is cultural content, ability to read and write, appreciation of the civilization and literature, etc. It is habit and conscious control, a set of automatized verbal habits controlled by the awareness of how the language works. Therefore, it is rather improper to speak of a 'method' in this case: it is one, though very important, section of language acquisition, and therefore one segment only within the whole process.

Recent theoretical and empirical studies of the validity of the audio-lingual method point concordantly in the direction of its partial fulfilment of the integral requirements of foreign language teaching. If taken narrowly, it would overemphasize verbal automatization and neglect more conscious operations required by human learning. It would be reduced to a mere 'mim-mem' type of learning where mimicry and memorization would exhaust all phases of language acquisition. (Rivers, 1964; Scherer & Wertheimer, 1964). Cognitive psycholinguistics has proposed a 'cognitive-code learning theory' which would take account of mentalistic processes in language learning against a mechanistic approach (Carroll).

6.4 The Integrated Approach.

Both theory and experience converge to show that the complexity of the language learning process can be met with a multiple type of teaching approach. Overemphasis on one or few aspects of the process of language acquisition has been responsible for the present proliferation of methods, each claiming almost absolute truth or unique value. Open-minded teachers and scholars are convinced that no one single factor can explain and guide language learning as a developmental process. A more comprehensive philosophy and psychology of language learning, therefore, point to the necessity of postulating an integrated view and a multiple-dimensional approach in methodology.

Integration of a multiplicity of procedures into the same method can be based merely on experiential, or pre-scientific, grounds or on truly scientific premisses and criteria. In the former case, the issue is a functionally eclectic methodology which is open to all valuable suggestions from systematic experience or from science, but is not in itself a strictly scientific construction. In the latter case, integration is the result of a scientific process which generates a scientific integrated approach.

H.E. Palmer (1964, ch. 15) termed his own methodology a 'multiple line of approach' as based on an eclectic attitude. "This complete method", he declares, "... boldly incorporates what is valuable in any system or method of teaching and refuses to recognize any conflict, except the conflict between the good and the inherently bad. The complete method will embody every type of teaching except bad teaching, and every process of learning except defective learning. The complete method (of which the multiple line of approach is the expression) is the antithesis of the special or patent method. Patent or proprietary methods very often, but not always, resemble patent medicines. We know what they are. A patent language method, like a patent medicine, claims to prevent or to cure all possible ills (linguistic or physical, as the case may be) by repeated applications of one special device or drug : both of them claim to kill innumerable birds with one stone ". (Palmer, 1964, pp. 110-111).

On the contrary, the eclectic approach will say : "Find the right stone to kill the right bird" and "It is often advisable to kill one bird with more than one stone". "This principle, which underlies all others, leaves the door open for new devices, new methods, and improvements on the old ones. It leaves us free to welcome and to adopt all sorts of innovations, provided such innovations are likely to prove of value". (Palmer, 1964, p.114).

A practical type of eclecticism as advocated by Palmer is not unscientific, for it is particularly inclined to welcome the best of contributions from science whether it be linguistics or anthropology, psychology or neurophysiology, etc. However, the whole approach is nothing more than a general attitude without real theoretical organization. It does not, briefly, constitute a system or an organized methodology.

The present writer feels, therefore, the need of going further along the line of integration in order to establish a genuinely scientific integrated methodology. In order to banish whatever is arbitrary and onesided, there seems to be no other way than exploring more deeply and extensively the process of language learning on the basis of a multi and inter-disciplinary scientific approach. The need for multiple scientific support arises from the very nature of the object of such learning, language, which in its structural and dynamic complexity can be adequately studied only by several converging scientific disciplines. (Lado, 1964; Titone, 1966). Such multidimensional character stems also from the complexity of the factors at work within the individual learner and his existential situation. Therefore, a truly scientific approach has to consider and to base its principles not only upon linguistics and semiotics, on the objective side of learning, or psychology, psychosociclinguistics, or other, on the subjective side, but on all the sciences, especially dealing with communication (like cybernetics and information theory), that are capable of clarifying all the aspects and factors actively present in the learning situation.

In general, any method stemming from a scientific integrated approach ought to be derived from :

i) a scientific linguistic, semiological, and socio-anthropological analysis of language and of the specific language to be taught;

ii) a psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic analysis of the process of second-language learning with reference to age, aptitude, motivation;

iii) a definition of the specific objectives to be attained by a particular course of language study; and

iv) the indications offered by a general theory of teaching and the results of experience and experimentation in foreign language teaching (historical and experimental dimensions.

Language teaching is essentially an open system (von Bertalanffy) and therefore an endless enterprise.

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VII. LANGUAGE TEACHING TACTICS (Procedures, Techniques, and Aids)

7.1 The literature on language teaching procedures and techniques is enormous. It is therefore clearly impossible to present a meaningful summary of all the ideas, experiences, and principles concerning the use of such means in second-language teaching. The only attainable purpose of this chapter will be consequently to outline a taxonomy of language teaching tactics with a view to point out the most important and valid operations and media.

Tactics is meant to include:

i) procedures, that is teacher operations designed to guide learning effectively (e.g. explanations, dialogues, exercises, etc);

ii) techniques, that is teacher operations designed to support learning by means of media (aids) (e.g. illustrations by means of slides or other, demonstrations of meaning by mimicry, etc.). So-called educational/instructional technologies are obviously connected with the latter. Of course, procedures and techniques interact effectively as suggested by modern strategies: for example, the language laboratory as a technological system interacts with classroom exercises and instructions.

Given the limitless amount of publications on the present subject only a selected bibliography will be given at the end of this chapter.

7.2 Language teaching procedures.

7.2.1 Cognitive procedures.

They are used to initiate the process of learning and tend to give a clear and complete idea of a learning task. They belong to three main categories :

7.2.1.1 Perceptional procedures .- Their aim is to lead the student to understanding the global meaning of a language passage used as a basic core of content and form. There are three useful forms of language presentation :

a) Dialogue.- Which is, so to say, verbal communication in a nutshell: it has a dynamic character, and it is typically pivoted on structures, while vocabulary is rather an integrative element. It is particularly useful for teaching grammar.

b) Description.- it is rather a sort of static representation of objects or environmental reality, and consequently it rests mainly on nomenclature (naming the objects in the classroom or in the house). It is of particular use in learning vocabulary, especially of a concrete sort ('ostensive procedures').

c) Narrative.- Inasmuch as it portrays both static reality and people's actions it combines the properties of both dialogue and description. It can be used for learning grammar and vocabulary. It can be both generated by and generative of dialogues and descriptions.

7.2.1.2 Analytic procedures.- They are segmentation operations which aim at breaking language passages, discourse units, and difficulties into smaller units or simpler points in order to lead the learner to easier and more complete understanding of vital kernels. They may be notional and/or operational, according as they aim at the logical explanation of a language point or at acquiring the ability to perform detailed operations (e.g. pronunciation of language sounds) correctly.

7.2.1.3 Synthetic procedures.- They consist in reconstructing a whole language unit (discourse, like a dialogue or a conversation, or a narrative and description) autonomously. In other words, the learner will have to reconstruct by himself (or in group work) the same type of language passage presented by the teacher or textbook at the beginning. It is not a notional but a performance operation. The learner is thereby induced to use the language as a whole, as a communication tool.

7.2.2 Reinforcement procedures.

Their aim consists in strengthening whatever the student has learnt at a cognitive level only. They tend to produce assimilation of skills. They are of two main types:

a) exercises, of a rather flexible type and not intensive but more extensive in nature, and

b) drills, fixed in their forms (like pattern drills), intensive in nature, generally of a repetitive type. Both categories moreover, can be of three kinds :

- remedial (designed to correct errors),
- strengthening (to consolidate automatisms), and
- developmental (aiming at expanding autonomous ability to use the language creatively).

Again both categories can be either isolated (out of context, with the purpose of overcoming very particular difficulties intrinsic in a single element or unit: e.g. a sound cluster, a grammatical pattern, etc.) or situational (as part of a communication setting, like a conversation, a dramatization or other)

7.2.3 Feed-back procedures.

They tend to develop conscious mastery of the language through

a) evaluation (and self-evaluation) by testing (occasional or periodical check-up; formative and summative evaluation), and

b) correction (and self-correction). It must be stated that the importance of evaluation or of any feed-back or control procedure is enormous. Language being in the human individual essentially conscious behaviour, at least in its deep roots, must become terminally a consciously controlled system, capable of rational selection and programming in the construction of each speech act or in the decoding of each verbal message (according to the principle laid down above that tactics presupposes strategy).

7.3 Language teaching techniques and aids.

Much has been said and written in the past twenty years about the uses and the advantages of audiovisual aids, of the language laboratory, and of programmed learning. An interesting attempt at simplifying and evaluating language teaching media has been proposed by Zierer (1973, p. 97 ff.). It is based on a definition of tactical steps in second-language teaching.

Phase 1 : General characteristic: Teaching operations are kept up by means of direct teacher-student contact.

Level 1.1
- a) conventional media (blackboard, postcards, wall-charts, flanellograph, magnet-board)
- b) tape recorder with additional loud-speakers
- c) slide and overhead projector and alike
- d) film-projector (both for motion pictures and film-strips).

Level 1.2 Electronic classroom

Phase 2 : General characteristic : Gradual transition to individual work with partial elimination of teacher-pupil contact.

Level 2.1
- a) language laboratory of the audio-passive type
- b) language laboratory of the audio-active type
- c) broadcast-type language laboratory (unified programmes for groups of students)
- d) library-mode language laboratory (for individual self-instruction use)
- e) audio-visual language laboratory

Level 2.2 Programmed instruction, of the branching or linear types, based on teaching machines or programmed text-books.

Phase 3 : General characteristics: Individual work is prevalent, although there may be occasional teacher-pupil contacts.

Level 3.1 Combination of passive communication media: radio, television: pre-established programmes for specific use in language learning or variety programmes subject to utilization in language study for enrichment purposes.

Phase 4 : General characteristics: Computer-aided instruction. Apparatuses and programmes are specifically designed for language teaching purposes.

Level 4.1 Terminals connected with a centralized computer releasing a requested programme and guiding and evaluating the single learner.

General remarks.- Naive belief in the exceptional effectiveness of technological aids in language teaching has gradually subsided in recent years. Especially language teaching implies by its very nature communicative relations and rapport, in other words inter-personal contact. Consequently technological aids can perform a limited function only, in soliciting adequate language use and promoting final mastery. Any technological medium is efficient only inasmuch as it can promote actual verbal communication. The danger lies in the possible 'isolating' effect of the language laboratory and the instructional computer.

Therefore, modern media must be used in strict adherence to well-defined language behavioural objectives and in a flexible and integrated manner.

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VIII. RESEARCH IN SECOND-LANGUAGE TEACHING

8.1 The experimental component in language-teaching methodology.

Any methodological plan, no matter how scientifically grounded, merely constitutes the terms of a pedagogical hypothesis and not yet a system of methodological principles or prescriptions. Accordingly a clear trend in recent times has been characterized by the appeal to experimental validation of hypothesized methods and procedures.

It is the principle of efficiency which must illuminate teaching practice. Efficiency supposes strict adherence to the reality of teaching, that is the objectivity and precision which are guaranteed by the scientific method. Hence the expansion of research and experimentation in applied linguistics and language-teaching methodology.

The terms "experimentation" and "research" in the fields of psychology and education have become almost synonymous. The techniques of research were at first applied in the laboratory. At the beginning of this century scientists began to distinguish between "pure research" and "applied or practical research", the second aiming at modifying particular plans of action. The label "experimental education" was at first applied to research work conducted in ordinary classroom situations and not in the laboratory. The research work, however, was carried out with the help of analysis procedures already used in the laboratory. The label "education research" was introduced later when it was understood that the observation and control of student work, in the artificial atmosphere of the laboratory, were less significant from the teaching point of view than they would have seen if obtained in a more spontaneous situation such as the classroom. A more recent distinction concerns the concepts of "operational research" and "experimental research" where the opposition refers to the conditions of observation: operational research studies procedures during their normal operations, while experimental research involves the modification of the given conditions or the creation of special conditions.

The teacher, rather than being an experimenter, will, more often than not, be an indispensable and highly useful assistant to the experimenter. He will be not only the first person to submit the problems and define them realistically, but also the most suitable person to apply the procedures suggested in the research plan and to interpret the results obtained with a realistic perspective. It is, therefore, desirable that all teachers be trained accordingly in understanding experimental jargon and techniques.

Today, the point can be forcibly applied to language teachers, as it is likely that the language teaching field registers (in comparison with other branches of pedagogy) the largest amount of research. It is easy to support this statement simply by opening the vast bibliographical inventories recently compiled by various national and international centres (cf. Nostrand, 1965 ff; U.S. Office of Education, 1965 ff; Linguistics & Language Teaching: Abstracts, 1962 ff).

It is clearly impossible to outline in a few pages even a rough summary of this vast amount of documentary material. One can only try to rapidly touch on some of the most significant data and trends (cf. Carroll, in Gage, 1964; Carroll, 1966; Ornstein and Lado, 1966).

8.2 A typology of educational research in language teaching.

It is useful first of all, to mention some of the features which quite generally mark out the most recent methodological tendencies. The emphasis has been placed by modern methodology on the following requirements:

i) priority of oral learning based on listening and repetition;

ii) prevention of interference between L_1 and L_2 by analizing contrasts on the phonological, morphological, syntactical, lexical levels existing between the two languages;

iii) direct assimilation of structures by communicative practice in situation. Along these lines particular research projects attempt to verify the role of specific learning factors.

There are types of research which tend to verify the value of isolated procedures (e.g. the use or exclusion of the student's mother tongue, the priority of the spoken language over the written language, the use of a native speaker as a model of correct pronunciation), or an overall type of research which tries to embrace all the constituents of a method (e.g., the audio-lingual method vs. the cognitive-code method). The former types of research (that may be called microstructural) are obviously not very realistic as they isolate steps and procedures which, in actual teaching situations, are inseparable and strictly interdependent. For example, the exclusion of the mother tongue from the teaching process involves a completely different type of planning, selection, and grading of language materials, different types of textbooks and instructional aids. The use, furthermore, of a visual stimulus instead of a sound stimulus in the teaching of vocabulary represents an unreal situation in the process of learning a living language.

Some researchers have thought it useful to experiment with 'miniature' teaching situations in which the objectives of instruction should be well defined and the variables could be accurately controlled. Dunkel (1948, pp. 114-120, 177-190), for example, conducted an experiment in which a short series of lessons in Persian was made up in alternate form in such a way that the visual form and the sound form could be compared. The foresseable disadvantage in this case is that the educational process assumes an artificial rythm considerably different from that followed in normal teaching, and the programming of assimilation times does not correspond to the actual capabilities of the student. The results obtained in similar experiments cannot therefore be lawfully generalized.

Thus adherence to teaching reality becomes a criterion of prime importance to be aided by scientific rule. A naturally complex situation subjected to experimentation will obviously present other problem in particular, the accurate control of the functioning of each single variable becomes very difficult. One could then accept the compromise suggested by Carroll (in Gage, 1964). Small scale 'miniaturized' experiments can be devised and conducted in a psychological or educational laboratory or in a particular classroom situation where one attempts to introduce selected basic procedures; later on, during operational research work, certain changes will have to be carried out on these procedures. "It may be suggested that a particularly useful context, in which educational experimentation could be done, is a regular language course from which a short period (a few days, say) is selected to stage special variations in instructional methods" (Carroll, in Gage, 1964, p. 1066).

In order to better understand typological variants in language-teaching research, it will be useful to compare two typical projects of an overall character: the first, which goes back to 1948, by Agard and Dunkel (1948), is more of the survey type; the second, conducted in 1960-62 by a linguist, Scherer, and a psychologist, Wertheimer, claims to be an authentic experimental project.

8.2.1 'Survey' type research.

The investigation conducted on a vast scale by Agard and Dunkel consisted in a comparative study based on results gathered in a number of secondary schools and colleges throughout the United States which had been using 'traditional' or 'new type' methods of language teaching. Among the provocative conclusions drawn by the authors it may be noted chiefly that few or none of the students who had attended the "audio-oral" courses were able to reach, in one or two years, that stage of language learning known as 'spontaneous ease of expression', and that the low correlation of the results of reading and listening tests, in both the experimental and the conventional programmes, supplies conclusive proof that (at least at a 'sub-native' level of competence) oral-listening gain and reading gain constitute independent and separate skills which develop only through a separate specific training in each one, not one out of the other (Agard & Dunkel, 1948, pp. 291-2).

Agard and Dunkel concluded their report on what was in a certain sense a somewhat pessimistic note. As it would be unrealistic to think that normal school programmes would allow all the time necessary to give students a good knowledge of languages, it was essential to re-examine the requirements of educational programmes. In any case, more precise definitions of the objectives, more modest requirements, better tests, and more accurately prepared experiments were necessary.

However, the Agard and Dunkel survey lacked exact control and rigorous experimental planning and only a few aspects of the pre-training situation were considered. Even though the research workers did exercise considerable efforts in the preparation of proficiency tests, these did not seem as suitable, reliable or valid as had been desired. It may be that there were real differences in efficiency between the conventional groups and the 'new type' groups, but the tests failed to reveal them.

On the other hand, the Agard-Dunkel report contains a considerable amount of information and comments on the teaching of foreign languages, together with another book on the same subject (Dunkel, 1948). One of the important features that come out of the investigation is that results were largely conditioned by the time available for instruction which was too short if compared with that involved by intensive language courses (like the ASTP: a minimum of 15 hours a week for a total of 36 weeks, i.e. a total of 540 hours).

8.2.2 The 'experimental' type of research.

The other research project represented the first complete experiment on the comparison of the "audio-oral" method with the "grammar-translation" method (Scherer & Wertheimer, 1964). The experiment was conducted at the University of Colorado during the two academic years 1960-62. The main aim was the comparison of two complex methodological models. At the same time, however, it was desirable to check certain particular aspects, of a psycholinguistic nature, involved in the process of acquiring a foreign language. At the start the control group and the experimental group were composed of an equal number of students of German, 150, divided into six sections. The control group would emphasize the written language: grammar, translation, and reading. The experimental group was to be subjected exclusively to the audio-oral method for the first twelve weeks, postponing the introduction of reading and writing. The teaching, both in class and in the laboratory, was pivoted on specifically constructed dialogues and exercises.

The results were checked periodically by means of appropriate tests of the following four types : achievement tests, objective index of direct habitual association, subjective index of association, motivational and attitudinal assessments. For each test statistical measurements were elaborated with the aim of establishing correlations between each test and all others, and to ascertain the actual validity of the test. The differences between the groups at the end of each semester were calculated.

In general, the results can be summed up in the words of the authors: "Overall, the , the end of the first year saw the audiolingual students better in listening and speaking, but worse in reading, writing, and both kinds of translation. At the end of the second year, the audiolingual students were still better in speaking, but poorer in writing and German-to-English translation ; they were no different in listening, reading, or English-to-German translation. The fact that the experimental group was generally superior in some skills, but that the control group was superior in others, shows that one of the main original hypotheses was not confirmed - the audiolingual group, while it did occasionally reach, never did surpass the traditional in reading, writing, and translation during the two years of the experiment. A combination score, weighing audiolingual and non-audiolingual skills equally, was computed to assess any grand total differences ; the two groups were not significantly different in this overall-proficiency index at the end of the four semesters". (Scherer & Wertheimer, 1964, p. 244).

The differences, therefore, appeared only in certain areas : greater efficiency in listening comprehension and in speaking, and a better attitude towards the language and the mentality represented by the German language werethe most striking aspects of the results obtained by using a live and stimulating method.

A seemingly naive conclusion can be drawn from this, as from other experiments : each method yields the results for which it has been devised, and nothing more ; it develops only those skills on which it concentrates, and no others. It is useless and fruitless to continue comparing partial methods in the hope that they may give results of general value. It would, therefore, be a good idea if researchers, before starting their work, relied on sounder theoretical models.

8.2.3 Micro-structural research.

In addition to these few large-scale research projects, there exists a very long list of specific investigations which have attempted to explore various aspects of phonological, grammatical, and lexical learning; the improvement of listening and conversational abilities; the relationship between the visual and auditory modalities of language learning; the different degrees of effectiveness of instructional aids presently in use (textbooks, drills, films, tape recorders, records), and, particularly in recent years, language laboratories, programmed instruction, and computer-assisted instruction.

In brief, as regards the use of the language laboratory, the more rigorous investigations tend to emphasize that greater efficacy depends on one important variable: the time devoted to the use of this medium (Keating, 1963; Anderson, 1964; Allen, 1960 Bumpass, 1964; Rassegna Italiana di Linguistica Applicata, 1973). With regard to the use of programmed language instruction - both in the form of special textbooks and of mechanical and electronic apparatus - it can be said that there are still many unsolved problems, and that, in particular, the most urgent concern is adequate motivation in the student and the adaptation of programmed materials to individual differences. (Saltzman, 1964; Mueller 1964; Hood Roberts, 1972). Research on the use of completely self-instructional programmed courses applied to adult language students has, in general, given positive results with regard to pattern assimilation, but it leaves many open doubts as to the development of communicative competence.

It must frankly be acknowledged that the new ideas on communicative competence and on the development of communication functions as the core of the language syllabus have thrown many beliefs in the effectiveness of technological aids into severe crisis. However, only scientific research will allow decisions on the point. A large task looms ahead of language teaching researchers for the near future.

8.3 Open issues and research programmes.

It would be utterly impossible to attempt to define a complete list of existing language-teaching problems open to and requesting research. Perhaps, only with regard to second-language teaching to young children it would be possible to gather a significant list of problem categories on the basis of very valuable writings by Carroll (in Stern, 1969), Mackey (in Stern, 1969), and Stern and Weinrib (1977). Especially the contribution given by Carroll to the organization of research in the early teaching of foreign languages is of exceptional value (see esp. J.B. Carroll's "Research Guide" in Stern, 1969, pp. 201-59).

Less organized is the body of theories, interpretations, and recommendations concerning adult language learning. By and large, we can gather the main issues for research into the following very general categories:

i) Modalities and factors working differentially in child and adult learning of second languages.

ii) Criteria for curriculum planning and development in the field of second-language teaching in accordance to local needs (socio-linguistic and socio-educational perspectives).

iii) Adaptation of language materials according to principles of selection, gradation, and presentation (contents and methods).

iv) Definition of strategies and tactics depending on the acceptance of functional objectives ('threshold level', communicative competence, language functions, guidance of the learning process and error analysis, teaching-algorithms, use of procedures and technological aids in connection with the problem of modern 'gadgets' and alike).

v) Evaluation of achievement in language learning at different proficiency levels (criterial measures, types of tests).

vi) Integration of second-language study with the general educational curriculum and language planning by specification of community needs.

It goes without saying that each of these problems must be tested against the needs, expectations, demands, and conditions of the community of language consumers. What may be perfectly in tune with the needs and conditions of a European country may be at variance with the needs and requests of an African country. Socio-cultural, linguistic, and political-economic characteristics of the language-consuming community are basic in determining choice and policy in second-language programming. Which goes to say that no universal framework will be apriori absolutely valid.

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